872 to go home because Grandmother would have sent him back for a double
792 beating, so he hitched up his longyi, tied his shirt round his head and
861 swam across the stream. One of the huts on the other bank belonged to
a woman who had always been very fond of him because she believed
● [775] him to be a reincarnation of her brother who had died in childhood;
Burmese Buddhists believe that one goes through many existences on this earth, and sometimes children are born who have not yet forgotten their previous existence by the time they can talk; they adopt habits uncannily like those of the departed member who, the fond and grieving relatives hope, has returned to them in the guise of this new child; they say "My bed", "My clothes" to the possessions of the dead person, especially if eggs are not included in their diet, the belief being that eggs cause them to forget. When we were very young, the fame of a wonder child, who could recite the most learned religious passages untaught, spread throughout Burma, and my parents travelled to hear him; he had been a monk in his past existence and could remember.

792 My father's case was no outstanding one like this; he had just re-
561 sembled the lady's brother in looks and gesture, and a few childish utterances helped out by her belief had endeared my father to her as having been *winsa* (come in and inhabited) by her brother. The good and fond lady received the boy with open arms, agreed that he was getting too old for the monastery, and promised to go over and plead with my grandmother to take him out now and hasten his initiation ceremony into the priesthood. This was achieved and my father went back to his mother's house and prepared for the *shinbyu* as the ceremony was called.

484 The manner of his exit from the monastery, however, had made
177 him restless. During the short period he was free, he could go where
874 he willed, and in this way he often met traders who came and went between Ye and Tavoy, a seaport town about 100 miles away, to which passenger and cargo ships from Moulmein made regular trips. One day he was at the house on the opposite bank when a boy he used to know as a toddler returned from Tavoy after a trip to Moulmein. This boy could speak a few words of English. Moreover, he wore his hair in a *boha-dauk* (a Westerner's crop) and seemed to think my father a jungle boy. All the restlessness in my father flowed over then, because up to now he had always felt himself clever and ahead of other boys. He worried Grandmother to let him go to Moulmein and learn English, and and get a job with the government which would bring them hundreds of rupees each month. Other families who considered that Grandmother had clever sons agreed that this would be a good idea; though none of them had been to Moulmein and my father was still a boy, it would not be so daring an adventure as it sounded, because there was some one

245 and pink with juice; we shredded them in piles and ate them with prawn
262 powder and fish sauce. The *kanazo*, the *baccaurea sapida*, gave us a
824 fruit of a mouth-watering sweet-sourness. This fruit was said to induce diarrhœa and we were always made to eat the white piths which had a binding action.

262 Whereas we feasted on the fruits of trees, our elders turned to the sea for more fleshly succulence. My mother and aunts loved to get turtles' eggs, nastily soft white things the size of golf balls, boil them and tear them open to spill their richness on to a plate of boiled rice; they got oysters swimming soft and cold in vinegar; big nga-tha-lauk, hilsa fish, bursting with fatness, and thick buffalo's milk which always seemed to us more meaty and strong than cow's milk.

796 We came back to Ye itself for the New Year festival. The New
772 Year in our lunar calendar usually occurs round about April 13th, and
is the occasion of the descent of a spirit-king, the Tha-gya Min, king
• 775 of the tha-gyas, from heavenly regions to the world of men. The Burman Buddhist idea of the universe places the hellish, the earthly and the heavenly regions in well-defined order. In the centre of the universe is Mount Myinmo, the highest peak in all the world, a million miles above the sea and a million below the waters. Round about the sides of this mountain are ranged the six levels of heavenly regions where the Dewas or heavenly spirits dwell. These heavenly spirits also have homes in the sun, moon and stars. Far up in the heavens, above the seats of the Dewas, are ranged the sixteen seats of more perfect beings, the Byammas, one above the other. And far above them, as high as the imagination can soar, are four sublime seats, on the borders of the supreme Nirvana. Below the six levels of the Dewa regions of Myinmo are seven ranges of mountains, girdling the earth in a perfect ring interposed only by seven seas. In these seas are set four great islands, to the north, south, east and west of Myinmo Mountain, each attended by five hundred small islands grouped around it. On each island grows a fabulous tree which gives its name to the island, and dwell beings whose heads are shaped like the shape of the island. The northern, eastern and western islands are all more fair than the southern, life lasts for five hundred or a thousand years, and the trees bear gorgeous dresses and delicious foods of meat, but the inhabitants of the southern islands are infinitely more blessed in their merit. This island of Zampudipa, shaped like a trapezium and bearing the Zampu tree, surrounded by five hundred islands where live the English and the other nations of the human world, is the abode of man, the Buddhist man, and the known neighbours who are heretics from Buddhism. Here the inhabitants must work to weave their clothes and cook their food and

1: Mi Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Mon

live perhaps at the most a hundred years, but here also, and only here, do 796
the Buddhas appear to teach the right way of living which is the only 772
way in which the people can progress to the heavenly regions and to Nirvana. 775
Down below the earth are situated the hells, eight great ones and forty thousand and forty smaller hells, regions of torture and punishment.

Whereas the inhabitants of the northern, eastern and western islands around Myinmo, never hearing the words of a Buddha and never knowing the way of good and evil, are always born into the same world, never going up or down, man, the inhabitant of Zampudipa, may pass into the nethermost hell or the highest heavenly seat, according to the progress in his successive lives. Ascending the ladder from deep hells, through earth to heavenly regions, the spirit meets with existences which are not only more blessed in the degree of enjoyment and material happiness, but also correspondingly more free from fleshly desires and sin. Our Buddhist hells are the most frightening places one can imagine; as a child I used to look at the vivid pictures drawn in the friezes round pagoda building walls, to show the damnation that would befall the evildoer who was born into a hell. Boiling in oil, flesh being torn off the bones by monstrous dogs and vultures, saws and knives aflame with red heat slowly dismembering limb from limb, all these occur in life in any of the hells. The next stage upwards from hell is a life as an animal, which a man may be born to for lesser sins and an omission from doing meritorious deeds. Animals have their stages of nobility also. Lowest are those living on excrements of flesh of other animals, nobler are the herbivorous animals and noblest of all the elephant. Gautama Buddha passed one of his existences as a white elephant, which is the reason for the esteem in which a white elephant was held—so high, that Buddhist kings longed to be able to style themselves, *Hsin-byu Shin*, [743]
Lord (Owner) of the white elephant. During his life as a man, a being had the opportunity to live a right life, observing the precepts, giving alms and attending the pagoda regularly. His next existence might then be as an inhabitant of one of the six seats of the Dewas. In all these six seats through which the being may progress, life is surrounded by delights of foods, clothing and dwelling, but passion is less sensual, and decreases with ascent. Successively, a touch of the hand, and then gazing at the lover, and finally the mere presence in the same existence is enough to satisfy love. From here, concentrated meditation will carry a being higher to the seats of the Byammas; here he must get rid of all remaining affection for matter, for all parts of the body, until he attains to the four seats of Arupa. The contempt for matter continues in these existences, and finally, when all false persuasions leave the spirit, he passes into Nirvana, the lifeless, timeless state of bliss, in which the

776
772 spirit knows no joy and no sorrow, but remains perpetually contemplating
• 775 the abstract truth, delivered finally from the cycle of recurring existences.

This arrangement of the universe and of the progress of man
772 through different levels of it, was but a reflection of the Buddhist ideas
779 of cosmography prevalent at the time when the religion was first in flower. In our imagination they belonged with the distant Himalayas, the peaks too high for human sight, the clouds and mist on which a being with the Buddha's spiritual powers could ride in majesty. But whether every Burman Buddhist associates these regions with his daily life or not, there are few who, in the midst of their busiest worldly living, will not be excited, exalted, at the Canonical descriptions of the mind of the *arahat* when he becomes, by meditation and victory over the senses, ready to attain Nirvana. The following description is part of the Sammannaphala-sutta, one of the discourses of the Buddha :

"With mind concentrated, purified, cleansed, spotless, with the defilements gone, supple, ready to act, firm, impassible, he directs his attention to knowledge and insight. He understands that this my body has a shape, consists of the four elements, was produced by a mother and father, a collection of milk and gruel, subject to rubbing, pounding, breaking, and dissolution, and on this my consciousness rests, hereto it is bound.

"He then directs his attention to creating a mind-formed body. From his body he creates a mind-formed body having shape, and with all its limbs and faculties.

"He directs his attention to various kinds of magical powers. From being one he becomes many, and from being many becomes one. He goes across walls and hills without obstruction, plunges into and out of the earth, goes over water as if on dry land, passes through the air sitting cross-legged, and even touches the mighty moon and sun with his hand, and reaches to the world of Brahma.

"With purified divine ear he hears divine and human sounds both distant and near.

"He understands the state of the minds of other beings.

"The last three stages he attains are called the knowledges.

"First, the monk directs his attention to remembering his former existences. He remembers thousands of births and many cycles of existence, and knows that in such a place he was a being of such a name and clan, and had certain experiences and length of life in each of these births.

"Second, he directs his attention to the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings. With divine purified vision he sees evil doers being reborn in hell, and the virtuous in heaven, just as a man in a palace may see persons entering and coming out of a house.

674 like ours except that patches of blood made violent interruptions on the
764 chaste red and white striped design, being slung on a pole, carrying a
775 woman who had been hacked by the dah of a hot-tempered husband. When one of the villagers had died a sudden death through poisoning, we listened wide-eyed to Ma Aye Shwe's account of his burial. All the old and broken bottles of Ye had been collected and ground up. His grave was dug, and after the coffin had been put into it, was filled up with alternating layers of earth and of powdered glass. This was because one of our persisting animist beliefs is that a spirit whose body dies a "green" death, that is, sudden, violent and unnatural, will walk about the earth in the form of an undesirable ghost, and hence the glass which will keep it under the earth and prevent its escape, much as thieves are deterred from climbing a wall which has powdered glass strewn along its top.

731 Every few years also, the water of the Ye creek rose so high that the ground and main floors of all the houses were flooded, and my grandmother and aunts had to retreat with all perishable goods and furniture to the high reaches of the platform storey and camp there till the water retreated. How we longed to visit Ye when this happened, but the nearest we came to realizing these floods was to see unexpected little patches of the sand of the creek every now and again in the houses, where the traces of the visiting waters had not been swept away. In one really bad year the waters at chaung-bya swelled into a mountainous flood which rose suddenly in a great roar and carried with it huts and rafts and stored
[772] goods of all kinds. Grandmother and my great-aunts watched dumbly from the top of the pagoda hill, while cocks and hens and dogs and people clung to the thatched roofs of the floating houses, the cocks crowing and dogs baying and people praying, all rushing swiftly and inevitably past Ye, towards the great Thamoddhaya, the great ocean which is part of the waters which break the girdle of the Settkyawala Mountains circling the world around Myinmo Mount. Every few years, as a matter of fact, Uncle Thet Hnan, who had a garden and house at chaung-bya, lost a few tins of sesamum oil, or some part of his bamboo structures. This was because they all built and rebuilt the houses too near the water, to provide a quick escape from dacoits and enemies.

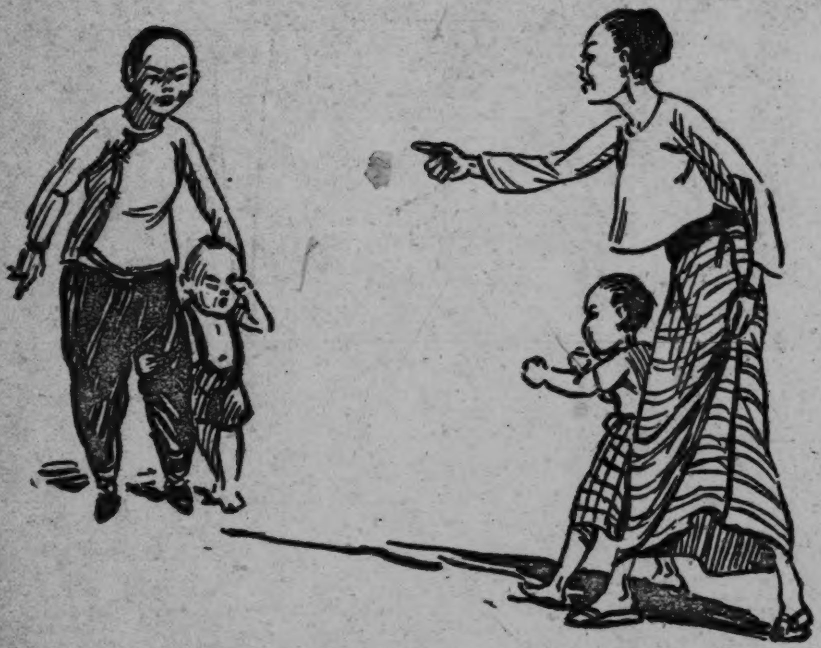
674 It was a dangerous life in these gardens even during our most recent years there, and my cousin Nyein Maung who was the stalwart to give my aunts most protection, developed into a rough and ready dispenser of justice. On one occasion he watched the hand of a thief creep up through the bamboo slathes of the flooring on which his little son played. The child wore a gold anklet which the hand coming out of the darkness tried to wrench off. Nyein Maung who anticipated that

527 The younger children of the families also took the precepts, but it was not considered wrong if they felt too hungry or faint to keep to them. Everyone packed up and went home from the resthouse at about four in the afternoon. I found these duty evenings very long and depressing. There was no dinner, my father and mother told beads all evening, and at night their mattresses were removed and they slept only on mats.

428 342 We were now living in Grandfather's old house. Grandfather had left it to the four youngest among his children, and my mother had bought out the shares of the others because she was sentimentally attached to it and could not bear to see it pulled down. To others it had seemed an unwieldy shape taking so much good teak which could have built a compact modern house. My mother set about the task of transforming in into a comfortable domestic family house with a nicely disposed front and back, but it was a difficult task. There was no neat garden plot, no face, no bedrooms, but long stretches of gallery and verandah. We fenced off the well so that the village could continue to use it without infringing our privacy, the old big kitchen was dismantled and a compact kitchen made of one of the store-rooms near the washing platform, the old maternity room was stocked with commodes and made into a lavatory, the powder room was used as box-room. Six of us shared the big bedrooms. The altar, the water-pots and meals continued where they had always been. There was a large expanse of shining floor for visitors to sit on mats, and the head of the long verandah held a few chairs. The stable was cleaned up and given to Apana, now an old and rheumy-eyed man, and the downstairs hall, where a school had been, now held our stocks of rubber.

511 563 • 775 But still there was always so much space, the house seemed vast and empty, and the life so different from our district government houses with a crowd of servants, young men and dependents of all kinds. We felt the change acutely. My sisters were still children who played with each other and had plenty to eat during their short holidays, but I found the evenings silent and sad with the lifeless echoes which the dim light of the floorboards used to send up. I had been to stay at the house for short periods just before my Grandfather died, when I was about three or four years old. Here, where we washed our faces, we looked across to a house now mysteriously barred with a blank wooden face, but then inhabited by *ta-yok chi-thay-mas*, tiny-footed China-women, fabulous creatures according to my nurses, who, though they were slit-eyed and could curse you in an unknown tongue, could be sent reeling back with one touch of a finger. The ta-yok chi-thay-ma had other macabre qualities also. Her child had a big black patch of hair on its arm because it was the reincarnation of his dead sister. At the death of this

Chinese



previous child, the ta-yok chi-thay-ma had frantically grabbed a piece 511
of charcoal and had smudged the arm of the dying child, saying: "If I 563
get this child back in my next labour, may I know her by this mark." 776 ●
Down below the arum bushes grew close and dark against the fence.
They had frightened us, like green snakes that must not be touched, [137]
because the leaves made your tongue itch with an intangible and incur-
able itch although the roots were made into delicious soups. In Grand- [562]
father's bedroom was a window looking into the maternity chamber,
still padlocked with a lock whose key had been lost nearly twenty years
ago, and a patch of light wood nailed over the hole which a robber had
made with the point of his damyaung. From the maternity chamber,
also, an aunt had thrown a basin of washing water to splash on an uncle
sitting below, with whom she had quarrelled and whose hpon would be
lowered by the ignobility of the woman's labour. For my mother the
house must have had sharp memories, but she never spoke of them
while there because my father became ill shortly after. This oppressed
her spirits, and made her think only with sorrow of her dead mother and
father, her brothers and sisters, so many now dead and the rest scattered
far and never returning after the death of Grandfather.

584 family made it necessary to arrange things in a traditional manner. My brother had chosen his bride from a family of sisters who had been to school with us and with whom we were on the friendliest terms, so that he could have pressed his own suit if he wished, but since my sister-in-law's family also stood for tradition, we had to go through elaborate negotiations.

For a go-between we chose a lady who belonged to high circles of Rangoon society and who was known to be a great friend of the girl's family. One morning my mother and I paid her a formal call and made the proposal, my mother reciting the list of her son's qualifications which the lady already knew quite well. She promised to approach the guardian aunt of the girl's family. Shortly after this, we called on the aunt, who demurred, not to seem eager, and said, moreover, that she could not give an answer until she had consulted an astrologer to see whether the stars of the young man and woman formed an auspicious union. We thereupon gave her the date and hour of my brother's birth. During all this time, no word had passed between my future sister-in-law and us upon the matter; we did not, in fact, visit her. In due course, the aunt gave her answer, and while my brother was out of town on a tour, a party was held at the girl's house, with the senior relatives of both sides present to formalize the engagement. No unmarried young girls should attend this, out of modesty, and although I went along as my mother's right-hand, I had to closet myself in the bedroom with the girls. It was only then, when the elders were formalizing the engagement, that my sister-in-law did not feel it forward to talk about the wedding and future happiness with much excitement. After the engagement had been announced, my brother was allowed to call every day during the three months of their engagement, but they were not allowed to be seen together in public.

177. Meanwhile, great preparations went on, for besides the social arrange-
19 ments attendant on all weddings, the attire of the bride and bride-
764 groom had to be matched in colour, a panegyric writer had to be found to write the poem of praise, and suitable elders to perform the ceremony
775 had to be agreed upon. The modern Burmese custom is to ask the most respected highly placed Burmese couple among the family's friends, along with an equally respected English official to pronounce recognition in English. (This learning of English by a vast number of Burmans, and their daily activities in that language, have led to much duplication of effort in the disposal of their spirits also. When a person is buried, a notice is served on his spirit that this body is now to be vacated, and the spirit to go elsewhere for fear that the faithful spirit hovering round the grave may create a ta-say, a ghost. When a student died in term time at the University, the rites at her funeral were completed only when a

1: Mi Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

lecturer went to the head of the grave and said in English: "So-and-so, 177.
I give you notice that you are no longer in the Jr. B. A. class." When 19
U Tin Gyi died during an official visit to England, we held his cremation 764
at Golders Green and succeeded in getting a Singhalese hpongyi from the
Buddhist Lodge in London to perform the rites. In spite of the environment 775
of the crematorium we felt that we had achieved a dim and religious Buddhist atmosphere, such as he would have wished, by the time the hpongyi had intoned the verses, with all the gathered Burmese students repeating them phrase by phrase. But suddenly one of the English officers present got up and read in English: "U Tin Gyi, O.B.E., Registrar for Co-operative Societies in the Government of Burma, I give you leave to relinquish your post in the service of the Government. Signed—Adams." As if the persistent ghost might return to haunt in English, having been dismissed in only one of his two languages.)

Mr. Bernard Swithinbank of the I.C.S. had, through long years of 000
friendship for Burmese people, laid the hands of many young couples one upon the other in marriage, and in this case he seemed particularly fitted for the task, for twenty-five years before he had married the parents of the bride, and though he could not perform for the bridegroom's parents their marriage ceremony which was held in Grandfather's time, it was he who gave my father leave to go to Thaton, as senior officer wishing him all prosperity in his marriage.

At last the great day arrived and all the male cousins and uncles 585
collected at our house to dress the bridegroom with as much fuss as 292
attends a bride in any other country. My mother had bought three pink silk turbans varying barely perceptibly in shade, so that the young man's complexion might be matched exactly when the fateful hour approached. My two young sisters and I took one each and sewed the finest possible seams, but submitting every inch as we went long to the scrutiny of my senior uncle Kyaw Din who said that a man's turban needed finer sewing than any woman's garment. My *Ko Lay*, most debonair of the cousins, tied the turban on my brother's head, while the band of elder brothers-once-removed stood around and complained that he did not make the floating end dance and toss with sufficient sprightliness. Two uncles and two cousins combined to tie his pasoe, the magnificent skirt which had been brought down from Mandalay and matched in the weaving with the bride's own skirt. My brother submitted to all of this with a meekness born of never having worn full Burmese dress before. All the while my three sisters danced around to look at him from every angle, exclaiming with sauciness and delight how beautiful and pink he looked, for my brother was really a robust and dark-skinned type of man who liked to wear sober English clothes.

846 she is made to smell samôn-net, a plant (the *Nigella sativa*),
757 which is put in an earthen pot, strongly heated, and then
triturated into the shape of a ball. The odour is not exactly
such as one would recognise as calculated to exhilarate any
one, but probably after the hot bricks and the se sein every-
thing else comes as a matter of detail. All this is done to
drive out the noxious humours which are supposed to be
generated by the birth of a child. On the seventh day the
woman takes an elementary kind of Turkish bath. She sits
over a large jar of boiling water, medicated with tamarind
twigs and a few other kinds of leaves and grasses, with a
blanket over her. After about an hour of this she has a
cold bath, and is then free to do as she pleases. She usually
goes to bed.

165 It might be supposed that under this treatment death
846 in child-bearing would be very frequent, but as far as
177.84 imperfect statistics can show the percentage is not much
higher than in other countries. The result, however, appears
184 in another way. A woman ages up ten or fifteen years for
every child she has. It is satisfactory to notice that in all
the larger towns in Lower Burma the more unpleasant
features are fading away before the example and influence
of women of other nationalities. In the jungle and in
Upper Burma, however, ancient use and wont still prevail,
and the young mother of fourteen or fifteen is shrivelled
into thirty with her first baby.

845 If a woman gives birth to a still-born child, a piece of
iron is placed in the cloth in which the body is wrapped, or
in the coffin if there is one, and at the burial some member
of the family says some such formula as "Never more return
into thy mother's womb till this metal becomes soft as down."

If a married woman dies before bearing a child (alôn
● [775] hnin the-thi), a Cæsarean operation is performed, and the
alôn is buried in some secret place. The reason alleged for
this is, that were it not done, the husband in future exist-
ences would marry this woman again, and she would die in
845 the same way. Were the embryo not secretly buried it
754 would be disinterred by hmaw-sayās, necromancers, and
wizards, who would make evil uses of it. Children's cauls
are as highly thought of by Burmans as they are by English

All the ill deeds he does will swell the sum of his demerits, but not a single good action, no uttermost act of charity or devotion, will be recorded to his advantage for another existence. Without admission to the order, without "Buddhist baptism," no man can count his present existence as other than an animal's. 872 779 792 775 186 The great gift of having appeared in the likeness of a human being; the happy balancing of merits and demerits which has resulted in so glorious an opportunity of advancing towards Ne'-ban; the still greater fortune of existence in a country where the tenets of Buddhism offer supreme chances to the weary seeker after rest from the moil of a work-a-day world; all will have been recklessly thrown away. It is written that more hardly will a needle cast from the summit of Mount Myinmo across the wide Thamoddaya Sea, more hardly will it touch with its point as it falls another needle standing point upwards in the great Southern Island, than will any given creature become a human being. How are the Western foreigners, black and white, to be pitied, who have indeed by earnest strivings attained the seat of man, but, arrived there, find it all naught because they do not hear the teachings of the Buddha! How much worse the Burman, to whom all his life long the monastery door stands open, to whom a week's, a day's, an hour's sojourn would offer boundless possibilities, and yet who enters not in. If this be so, what then can be the prospect for the boy who having put his hand to the plough turns back, who entering the monastery as a child, imbibes the religious thoughts and becomes acquainted with the religious creed, and yet fails to seek the "humanity" so easily to be gained? Better have been born an animal or an Englishman, and scoffed at what he did not understand.

871 792 177.87 Consequently it may be invariably assumed that the little scholar, as soon as age and acquirements admit, puts on the yellow garb as a finish to his education. This used to include every one. Till the English came and took the country, everybody went to the Pon-gyi-Kyaung. But now there are English government schools; there are Burmese laymen's schools, which neglect religious education altogether, and look to competitive examinations as the end and aim of juvenile existence, as the ne'-ban of school life.

CHAPTER III

BUDDHIST BAPTISM

THE term baptism as applied to a youth who enters a monas- 792
tery in the state of probation (called shin) is not, as many 561
people think, a mere idle analogy borrowed from the
Christian faith. The novice actually and formally receives [551]
a new name to mark his accession to the full dignity of
humanity. The great majority of shins, or ko-yins, are little
boys of twelve or a little older, but occasionally a man
secludes himself from the world at an advanced age. Till a 792
Buddhist has entered the fraternity he cannot claim to be 775
more than a mere animal. He has a lu nāmé, it is true,
a worldly name, but so might any ox, or horse, or elephant.
It is not till he has subjected himself to the discipline of the
kyaung that he can reap the fruits of a holy past and look
forward to a more glorious future.

The devils in the underworlds wear out
Deeds that were wicked in an age gone by.

Man has less innocence than the animals, and cannot, like [812]
them, progress by merely omitting to sin. He may make
golden stairways of his weaknesses indeed, but before he can
do so he must abandon the world, if it is only for twenty-four hours. Then he becomes an upathaka, a believer, and
towards another life will hold the gain as well as answer
for the loss in the present one, death casting up the debit
or credit.

Higher than Indra's ye may lift your lot,
And sink it lower than the worm or gnat.

In recognition of this new-gained power the novice drops 000

792 In recognition of this new-gained power the novice drop
553 his secular name and receives a bwè, an honorific title, to
776 mark that it is now open to him to escape from suffering.
561 The name lapses when he returns to the world again, but it
is sufficient that he has once borne it. He may now add to his kan, merit, and gain for himself a glorious new life by good works.

This is what is meant by calling the ceremony a baptism.
[198] The bwè are almost invariably Pali, or Burmanised Pali names, and follow the same rules with regard to initial letters as the lu nāmé. Thus a Maung Po Myat, born on Thursday, might take the name of Pyinya-Zawta, while the bwè of a Sunday child, Maung An, would be Adesa. This religious or Buddhist (on the analogy of Christian) name is, of course, retained by the regular members of the monastery, and a monk is never addressed by any other when a name is used at all. When he becomes old a U is added, as U Adesa, but it must not be forgotten that
[576] the use of a person's name in addressing him is considered very far from being polite in Burma, especially to one of rank and dignity such as a mendicant. On the other hand, one who has returned to the world never uses the bwè, not even when he accomplishes some great religious work such as the foundation of a pagoda, which according to a comforting belief ensures passage to Ne'ban after death.

The entry into the monastic order is therefore certainly the most important event in the life of a Burman, since only under the robe of the recluse and in the abandonment of the world can he completely fulfil the law and hope to find the way to eventual deliverance from the misery of ever-recur-
[796] ring existences. The popular time for the ceremony is just at the beginning of Wā, the Buddhist Lent, which lasts from July to October, roughly speaking. Strict Buddhists make their sons stay throughout the whole Wā. During that season feasts, though they do occur, are very much discountenanced, and dramatic performances are energetically denounced by the religious.

792 According to the letter of the law the intending proba-
561 tioners should have reached the age of fifteen, but this
184 regulation has almost entirely lapsed in Lower Burma,
177·84 among other reasons chiefly because that is just the most

breakfast ready prepared for them when they return from 792
their morning's walk, and are ready to set to with healthy 735
appetites. This question of Sybaritism is a chief source
of dispute between the rival sects of Mahā and Sulagandi. [795]

Breakfast done, they wash out the begging-bowls, and 792
chant a few lauds before the image of the Buddha, meditating
for a short time on kindness and affection. During
the succeeding hour the scholars are allowed to play about,
but must not make a noise, or indulge in quarrelsome games;
the religious pass the time in leisurely conversation, or in any
other way they please; the kyaung po-go usually has visits
from old people, who come to pay their respects, or perhaps [735]
the kyaung-tagā, the founder of the monastery, the patron of
his benefice, comes to consult with him on various matters,
or to converse about religion and good works. The etiquette
observed on these occasions is always very stately and ceremonious.
Whoever approaches, whether it be the poorest 792
villager, the founder of the monastery, or the governor of the 788
district, all alike must prostrate themselves three times before 775 ●
the yahan, and, with uplifted hands, say, "In order that
all the sins I have committed, in thought, in word, or in
deed, may be pardoned to me, I prostrate myself three times,
once in honour of the Buddha, again in honour of the Law,
and thirdly in honour of the Assembly, the three precious
things. By so doing, I hope to be preserved from the three
calamities, from the four states of punishment; and from the
five enemies, fire, water, thieves, governors (literally translated
burdens), and malevolent people." The sayā replies:
"As a reward for his merit and his obeisances, may the
supporter (tagā) be freed from the three calamities, the four
states of punishment, the five enemies, and from harm of
what kind soever. May all his aims be good and end well;
may he advance firmly in the noble path, perfect himself in
wisdom, and finally obtain rest in ne'ban." Whenever the
visitor addresses the yahan he joins his hands together, and
sitting as he does on a mat, slightly bends the body forward,
applying the title of payā, or lord, and making use of the [198]
honorific forms of speech specially reserved for the religious.
The mendicant on his part calls the layman, of whatever

792 rank, tagā, supporter, or, if the visitor be a woman, tăgama.
735 Somehow or other these conversations, like the addresses of
775 the religious to the people in the rest-houses, always seem
to come round to the subject of the merit of almsgiving. The recluse will say that whatever is presented, silk robe, mattress, pillow, betel-box, is purified by the merit of the alms deed. The poor could fill the Lord Buddha's begging-bowl with a handful of flowers; the rich could not do so with a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand measures of grain. The path in the noontide heat is hard to one who has no sandals, and no water-gourd. What, then, will be the path after death to one who has not charity and regard for the ten precepts! Alms deeds can defend a man and protect him against the influence and the sources of demerits which are man's true enemies. Liberality is chief among the ten great virtues; it is the second of the three works of perfection; it is the absolute soul of the five renouncements. With all these a man becomes a Buddha, without them he sinks to be an animal, or worse still, to the fiery chambers of hell.

When the conversation is over the layman bows down
792 three times again, saying, "My Lord's disciple does obeis-
788 ance"; or U tin ba thi "places his forehead on the
ground," rises, backs five or ten paces, and then turning on the right, as he would at the pagoda, departs. There may be quite a long succession of these visitors, and their respects are paid all through the afternoon, if the weather be not too hot.

At half-past eleven, however, there is another meal, usually a light refection of fruits, and this is the last of the day. The pyin-sin are expressly forbidden to eat after noon. Solid food taken after the shadows slope to the east endangers purity. The blood becomes heated, and, moreover, when the stomach is loaded the mind becomes overclouded and unfitted for meditation. It is worthy of remark that the religious must eat, as they walk, slowly and with gravity, only putting moderate-sized morsels into the mouth, and constantly bearing in mind that food is not intended for the gratification of the flesh, but for the nourishment of the body. The ceremony called a-kat must also be care-

As yet they[1] have not begun to demand an equal share 562
of education with the boys, and the only accomplishments 871
most Burmese girls know are how to dress neatly, do up
their hair, and powder their faces. This is the single open
implication of their inferiority—except in worship at the [775] ●
pagoda, when every woman will pray that in another existence
she may be a man—and it is not likely that female
education will make much progress for another generation,
the popular idea in Burma being that learning is no use to a
girl when she has it, and she may, consequently, as well
devote all her spare time to making herself look as pretty as
possible. Here and there are a few who are deeply learned
in Burmese literature. The young wife of one of the most
prominent living Burman pleaders in Rangoon has as good
a knowledge of the sacred books and as great a fluency in
repeating Pali rituals as any pôngyi in the country. But
the great majority of girls only know what they pick up
from the conversation of their brothers and the men who
come about the house. It is therefore greatly to their credit 562
that they manage not only house affairs, but their husband's [432]
business into the bargain. A farmer's wife will carry out the
sale of the whole rice crop to the agent of an English rice
firm in her husband's absence, and generally strikes a better
bargain than he would have made himself. If the village
head constable is away, the wife will get together the policemen,
stop a fight, arrest the offenders, and send them off to
the lock-up all on her own responsibility. The wife sits by,
no matter what public business is being transacted, and very
often puts in her own opinion quite as a matter of course; 562
in fact, she is virtual master of the house, and henpecked 581
husbands are not by any means uncommon. The last king 643
of Burma, Thibaw Min, was a notable instance. There 175
never was a king of Burma before who remained for three
years the husband of one wife. It was not inclination in
his case. He had quite a number of *amourettes*; but the
sturdy Supayā Lat and her formidable mother soon got the
offending damsels out of the way. There is also little
doubt that it was Supayā Lat and her mother who suggested
the massacre of the Princes and prompted the defiance
of the British Government, which brought about the ending
of the Burmese monarchy.

[1] [i.e., girls--ANALYST]

823 of Mount Meru give their different colours to each island.
779 Thus the Eastern Island is all white from being opposite to
772 the silver face of the mountain; the Western is green, because on that side Myinmo is of glass; the Northern Island glitters like gold, and the Southern is a pale-coloured brown-like carbuncle. Each island is named from the great tree which grows upon it and forms the sacred insignia of the island. Thus the Southern Island is named from the Zampu tree, the great Eugenia.

The Eastern, Western, and Northern Islands are very pleasant to dwell in, but especially the Northern. There the people live to the age of a thousand years, and always appear to be no more than eighteen. In the other islands they only live to be five hundred. In other respects the Northern Island is a regular land of Cockayne. The fabled Padetha Bin, elsewhere only found in the happy countries of the Nats, grows there. From its bounteous branches hang the most gorgeous dresses of every variety of colour, and the happy islanders have only to take them off. Nor are they at any necessity to till the ground to procure themselves food. From this tree they obtain also an abundant supply of a most excellent kind of rice, already husked to their hands. All that they have to do is to place it on a certain large stone, and it is forthwith cooked, and upon the branches of the trees round about appear the most dainty meats. Truly the Northern islanders have a most enviable existence. But in one respect, like the inhabitants of the Eastern and Western isles, they are unhappy. They are
779 always born back to the same island. They cannot raise
775 themselves in the scale of being, like the otherwise sorrowful Southern islanders. Only in Zampudipa do the Buddhas appear to teach the law and free the people from constant deaths and reappearances. From Tahingaya, the first Buddha, to Shin Gautama, under whose dispensation we now live, there have been twenty-eight Buddhas, and all of them have come to the great Southern Island. To Byammās, to Nats, even to animals and the agonised dwellers in the lowest hells, the blessed words have come, but never to those other dwellers in the islands of the great sea Thamôddaya. Thus are men enabled to attain to the state of Nats, to pass

through the seats of Rupa and Arupa, until finally, freed from passion and sorrow and the trammels of matter, they sink into the bliss of Ne'ban. Therefore have pious writers of old called the Southern Island Ne'ban's ferry. 779 775

Down below the earth, in the deepest recesses of the Southern Island, are the eight great Hells, surrounded by 40,040 smaller ones. Four of the great Hells are called Awidzi, and in addition to other tortures, terrible flames leap from wall to wall across the monstrous space, and extend on all sides beyond for a thousand yuzanas. The other four are called Lawkantyè, and there, instead of flames, we find hideous cold. A day in any of these places of torment is as long as thousands of mundane years.

The world having been created is as yet uninhabited. Our present earth, Badda, was peopled in the following way. From the seats of Zān, to which the destructive element had not reached, came down certain Byammās, some say three, some as many as nine. Holy people as they were and freed from all passions, they existed at first, like Adam and Eve, in a state of perfect bliss and innocence. They were not as the Kāma, the generating beings of the Four States of Punishment and the Seven States of Happiness—that of man and the six seats of Nats. But, like Adam and Eve, they fell into sin and thence into misery. First we read that they prayed for light. We may imagine that already the spiritual light had forsaken them, for in answer to their prayers appeared the sun, the moon, and the stars. The holy people had hitherto lived on a flavoured earth, which, however, driven away by their growing desire for matter, vanished and gave place to another species of food, a sweet creeping plant called Padalata. This was perfect in odour and flavour, but still the appetites of the people grew, and the Padalata was taken away and in its place appeared the Thalé san, a peculiarly fine kind of rice, which grew ready husked, and had only to be put in a pot, when it would cook itself. But by eating the Thalé rice, the Byammās became more and more gross, until, like Adam and Eve after eating the apple, they attained a knowledge of good and evil, and marriage was instituted. After this the 779 772

000
> And diamonds of her coronal; the moon
> Her forehead jewel, and the deepening dark
> Her woven garments. 'Twas her close-held breath
> Which came in scented sighs across the lawns
> While our Lord taught, and, while he taught, who heard—
> Though he were stranger in the land, or slave,
> High caste or low, come of the Aryan blood,
> Or Mlech or Jungle-dweller, seemed to hear
> What tongue his fellows talked. Nay, outside those
> Who crowded by the river, great and small,
> The birds and beasts and creeping things—'tis writ—
> Had sense of Buddha's vast embracing love
> And took the promise of his piteous speech;
> So that their lives—prisoned in shape of ape,
> Tiger, or deer, shagged bear, jackal, or wolf,
> Foul-feeding kite, pearled dove, or peacock gemmed,
> Squat toad, or speckled serpent, lizard, bat;
> Yea, or of fish fanning the river-waves—
> Touched meekly at the skirts of brotherhood
> With man who hath less innocence than these;
> And in mute gladness knew their bondage broke
> Whilst Buddha spake these things before the King.
>
> *The Light of Asia.*

779
● 775 And since that time some few have passed from our earth to Ne'ban, where the silence lives; "seeking nothing, they gained all." But far the most have failed; some have sunk to the Four States of Punishment; some have risen to the blissful seats of Nats; fewer have passed beyond to the meditative realms of Zān.

It is written that the life of man waxes from ten years to the huge period of an Athinkaya, and then wanes to ten years again. How is it, then, that some men live beyond a hundred years, and others die almost ere they have drawn breath? The reason is that some have taken no life at all in previous existences, and that others have, unwittingly perhaps, destroyed many creatures, and their own existence is correspondingly graduated. To maintain his dignity of man it is absolutely necessary that a human being must observe, as far as his powers admit, the Five great Precepts. Failure to observe these will infallibly result in a fall in the next existence into the States of Punishment.

It will be well to begin the ladder of existence at the lowest rung, at the worst of these four states. This is Nga-yè, hell—the most hideous of all. Even in Nga-yè

779
775 ●

there are gradations: the one mighty seat is divided into eight great holds, arranged one below the other, all with punishments so terrible that none can be said to exceed any other in hideousness. The names of all the eight great chambers, from Theinzo above to Awizi the nethermost hell, are given, but a detailed catalogue is unnecessary. Each great hell is surrounded by sixteen inferior places of torture called Ôtthad-daret. From west to east the flames stream through all the mighty space and pass through on the other side to a distance of a thousand yuzanas, and from east to west the same. From north to south, from Nadir to Pole, and Pole to Nadir, it is the same, and yet the torments of this heat are but a tithe of the gruesome tortures the sinner must suffer. The life of the Déwas in Tawadeintha is reckoned at sixteen million human years. That period is but as a day and night in Kālathôt, the second hell. Thirty such days and nights make a month, twelve months one year; and the wicked in the Kālathôt hell must pass one thousand such horrible years. The Nats in Tôt-thita live five hundred and seventy-six million years, which is but as one revolving sun and moon to the tenants of Yawruwa. Of such appalling days they must make up a tale of four thousand agonising years. The miserable wretches in Awizi work out the evil of their sins only in the space of an Andrakap, a period so vast that the mind cannot grasp it. As if these punishments were not sufficient to scare the weak and ignorant from sin, it has been revealed what other tortures await the damned. In one of the Ten [538] Great Sacred Mystery Plays it is related how a pious prince was shown the horrors of hell. The terrible pictures of the sixth book of the *Æneid*, the awful imaginings of Dante's poem, are outdone by the flesh-creeping minuteness of the Nemi Zāt. The prince saw men devoured by five-headed dogs, by famished vultures, by loathsome crows, the flesh being renewed as fast as the foul creatures tore it away; he saw others crushed beneath the weight of vast white-hot mountains, stretched on fiery bars and cut up with burning knives and flaming saws, their hearts slowly scratched and pierced with fiery needles, flame entering at the mouth and licking up the vitals, fiends all about, hacking, hewing, stabbing,

779 lacerating the body with all that the human mind has
775 imagined hideous, and all this, and ten times more, which it were only disgusting to write down, continued with never-abated torture to the wretched victims. The lesser hells are no less horrible; that of ordure, where huge stinging serpents and gnawing worms fasten on the sinners who are there immersed; those of burning coals, swords and knives, molten lead, fiery hammers which crush the bones at every stroke; that where the heart, lungs, and liver are torn out with hooks and slowly sliced and ever renewed. Occasionally the damned are transferred to the Lawkantyè hells, situated in the intermediate spaces between the Sekya worlds, where the tortures are those of frightful cold. Enough, however, has been said about the horrors of hell. The crimes which condemn a man, and the hell to which he is sent, are all duly recorded; but as one hell is as bad as another, it is unnecessary to recount these particulars. Suffice it to say that the man who scoffs at the Buddha and derides the law, will remain, throughout a whole revolution of nature, an entire Lawka, transfixed head downwards on a red-hot spit, in the lowest hell, hacked, gnawed, crushed, and beaten by all that is most awesome in all the flaming realms. There are twenty-one kinds of people who will fall into the lowest hell. Nineteen, however, if they see the error of their ways, and attend the pagodas with goodly offerings, may be redeemed; but the hunter and the fisherman cannot be saved. The impious Dewadat, cousin and brother-in-law of the Buddha, who tried to kill him, suffers terrible punishment. His feet are sunk ankle-deep in burning marl. His head is incased in a red-hot pan that caps it down to the lobe of the ears. Two large red-hot bars transfix him from back to front, two horizontally from right to left, and one impales him from head to foot. But since he repented when he sank into the earth to his doom, he will become a Pyitsega Buddha, under the name of Ahisara, in coming ages.

The State of Punishment above that of hell is that of the Thurakè. Their miseries are various. Some are keepers of hell by day or by night, themselves suffering all the horror of the terrible heat, assuming the form of man at other times. Others feed on their own flesh and

blood, and tear themselves with great hooks. Some are 779
six miles high, with projecting crab's eyes, short lids, and 775
a mouth the size of an ordinary mortal's, so that they are incessantly tormented by hunger. Above them are the Pyeitta, who in many respects resemble them in their sufferings. They wander on desert sea-shores and mountains, and in dismal forests, far from the abodes of man, naked and continually lamenting. Some have huge bodies with a mouth no larger than the eye of a needle, so that they can never satiate their craving for food. Others have huge, gluttonous mouths, always seeking to devour, but with no stomach in which the food can be received. Maggots, earth-worms, ants, and the like are often called Pyeitta, because they live on excrements and all manner of filth. This state is the one specially assigned to misers and niggardly, uncharitable people.

The highest of the Four States of Punishment is that of Tareiksan, or animals. Those who do not keep a guard over their passions, who are abusive, and who refrain from giving alms, will fall into the Bông of animals. Just as one man by reason of previous merits is born a prince, while another barely scrapes into human existence as an outcast pagoda slave, a grave-digger, a leper, or a heretic, so there are grades in the state of animals. To be an elephant is of course nearly as good as being a man; to be a white elephant is usually very much better. Any herbivorous animal is in a better state than a creature which eats flesh. Lions, tigers, and all life-destroying creatures are particularly undesirable transincorporations. The vulture is highly honoured because it never takes life, but lives entirely on carrion. Some animals are particularly esteemed as having been incarnations of the Lord Buddha. Such are the white elephant, the hare, the pigeon. Shin Gautama's first existence was in the form of a little bird, and all the stages he passed through in after existences are recorded in the Ten Great Zāts and the five hundred and ten minor tales. He who would cross the ferry to Ne'ban may learn from them how he may do so, and how miserable the toil is. Who would not seek the higher paths when he sees what the alternative is?

779 775 Raised from the Four States of Punishment to the Manôt-tha Bông, where as man the law is open to his study, the creature on his upward path should not be lightly stayed. To rise from the seat of man to that of Nats seems simple. Observe but the Five Precepts, give alms, live peaceably with all men, attend regularly at the pagodas on the appointed days that the image and model there presented to you may strengthen your resolution, do but live a respectable life, and the end is gained; you pass to the dwellings of the Déwas, there to spend long years of bliss. Good works will do much, but it is especially necessary to observe the Five Precepts. You must keep them in your mind every day, as you put your clothes on your body. The Ten Precepts must be kept on holy days, four times in every lunar month and throughout all Lent; these, and the daily giving of alms to the mendicants, will save you; your next existence will be in the Heavens of the Nats.

The Nat-pyi Chauk-tap, the six blissful seats, the highest of the Kāma Bông, the worlds of passion, are ranged on and around Mount Myinmo. Like the eight Hells they all have names, beginning with Zatu-ma-harit and ending with Para-neimmita Wot-thawati. The second and the fourth Heavens are the best known; for to Tawadeintha the Lord Buddha ascended in three steps to preach the law to his mother, the sainted Queen Maya, and countless Byammās and Immaterials from the far realms of Rupa and Arupa came to hear; and from Tôt-thita the embryo Budh descended to take flesh as Prince Theidat. The length of life in Tawadeintha is a thousand Déwa's years, that is, in earthly reckoning, nine millions. Similarly the four thousand of Tôt-thita are in human calendars five hundred and seventy-six million years.

Take up any book of fairy tales you have; revive your recollection of the *Arabian Nights*; recall any dream when you thought you had made your fortune, and you have a picture of the six blissful seats. A vision of song and dancing, beautiful and fragrant flowers, delicious fruits, palm-trees bearing, in place of leaves, rich garments and priceless ornaments and dainty cates, great gorgeous palaces with crystal pavements, golden columns, and jewelled walls; a

779
775

tinkling of gold and silver bells, intoxicating music—everything the most fervid imagination can picture, all are found in these happy realms. Prince Nemi was granted a sight of them as well as of the horrors of hell.

Passion still prevails, but it becomes less and less sensual the higher we rise. In Tôt-thita a touch of the hand satisfies love; in the fifth seat, lovers simply gaze on each other; and in the sixth, existence in the same place is enough. The Nat of the highest Bông is not far from the twenty superior heavens.

Passage to the Déwa seats is obtained by the strict observance of the precepts and the regular performance of good works; the step beyond can only be accomplished by the aid of the intellect. Ignorance is always the chief hindrance to rise in the scale of worlds; it is especially so in the case of the superior heavens. The twenty higher seats can only be reached by concentrated meditation; by the performance of good works, not outwardly by the body, but inwardly by the soul. The three fundamental principles of Aneiksa, Dôkka, Anatta—transience, pain, vanity—must first be intently examined. Then we must pass on through the five kinds of meditation, the highest of which is Upekka, which brings perfect fixity, whence originates callousness to pleasure or pain, scorn or affection. Thus we pass through the successive stages of contemplation which lead us through the sixteen seats of Rupa, each of which constitute the first, second, and third Zāns—Thawtapan, Thakadagam, Anagam; the tenth and eleventh seats form the fourth Zān, and in the five highest, the Yahandas have entered on Thodda, on the current of perfection.

Thus we reach to the verge of the four immaterial superior heavens. To enter these we must get rid of all affection for matter. The thirty-two parts of the body are often mentioned in prayer by pious Buddhists, each part with its forty-four subdivisions. On these we must ponder till we understand and see the worthlessness of them. Then we must repeat ten thousand times "the firmament, or the æther, is immeasurable," till at length we reach the first Seit or idea of Arupa.

Thence we progress in contempt for matter till at last

777
775

we are delivered from the three Thangya, or false persuasions, and reaching the topmost seat of Arupa, Newa-thangya-nathangya-yatana, tremble on the verge of Ne'ban.

What is Ne'ban?

If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
Say unto such they lie;
If any teach Nirvana is to live,
Say unto such they err.

The common illustration of the schools will not suffice for matter-of-fact Western heretics. You tell them life is like a lamp, with its wick and its little lake of oil. It may be kindled and extinguished many times, fresh oil may be added, other lamps kindled from it, but at length the oil is exhausted, the flame flickers and dies away for ever. That is annihilation, you say. It is not. When a man dies and goes to Ne'ban he ceases to be individualised; he is no more agitated by existence, wretched in itself, still more wretched from the woes it reveals in others; he falls into a calm and never-ending cessation of existence; he knows nothing of others, or of the world, and so is a stranger to all feelings of joy or sorrow; he contemplates fixedly the abstract truth, which even the highest Immaterials cannot, perpetually; but he is not annihilated as the heretics assert; nor does he slip, like the dew-drop, into the shining sea; he is not absorbed into the supreme Buddha, as the Brahmins loosely say; he remains perpetually in a sacred calm, unmoved by any feeling whatever, in lifeless, timeless bliss.

The teachers strive to give a detailed explanation, but who can know? who can tell for certain the composition and economy of even the nearest star? They tell us this: Ne'ban is the extinction of Kan, the soul of recurring existences, the influence of merits and demerits, exemption from which means utter cessation from existences; Ne'ban is the stifling of Seit, the fire of passions, the entire hundred and twenty volitions and desires; Ne'ban is the cessation of Utu, exemption from revolving years, from the changes of seasons, from the variations of heat and cold, darkness and light; Ne'ban is the death of Ahāya, taste, typifying all the senses; Ne'ban is, in fact, the going out of all that we know as making up a living being; there remains behind what no

T19
T15

one can name and few even picture to themselves, and those who attempt it do so according to their individual fancies. When a person recovers from a grievous illness we can only say that to be free from infirmities is to recover one's health. So we say that a man has attained to Ne'ban when he is freed from the sorrows of existences.

In regard to the Lord Buddha himself, we are told that there are in reality three stages in Ne'ban. The first was the Ne'ban of Kiletha, of the earthly passions, when under the Baw-di Bin, the sacred banyan-tree, he renounced all and became a Buddha. The second was the Ne'ban of Khanda, when near Kôkthenayôn, he expired in the grove of sāl-trees, when the five supports of existence gave way and he finally departed from the thirty-one seats of the world. The third and last, the Ne'ban of Dat, will not be for nearly two thousand five hundred years, five thousand from the day of his death. Then the duration of the Great Master's teachings will have ceased, his cycle will have lapsed, and all his relics from all parts of the world will be miraculously gathered together into the place where the original Baw-di Bin stood; there will be many wondrous signs, and then all but the memory of him will be gone, the complete Ne'ban will have been attained.

The definition may be vague, and the monks of Burma, Siam, Japan, Ceylon, Thibet, and China may each have their own definition, but there is the same difficulty to be found in all religions with regard to the last mystery. Who can find agreement in the variety of Christian descriptions of the future life, where one places happiness in the eternal singing of songs and in feastings, another in gazing on the Deity, a third, with greater modesty, hopes to creep in by the door of which St. Peter holds the keys? Buddhists have in their six heavens and twenty superior seats a choice of every kind of bliss, suited to every liking. They have the Islamite delights of sense in the heavens of Dêwas with the houri nat-daughters. Then for the various kinds of meditation and mysticism they have the contemplative Byammā seats, while the four seats of Arupa afford room for the most transcendental speculation.

Yet all these ideal realms of phantasy—the dreams of

779 sense, of contemplation and mystic trance—have nothing to
● 775 do with the state of Ne'ban. It is not a "nothing." A "nothing" that can be imagined is an all, for according to the laws of thought, non-existence can only be understood in a relative sense. The Buddhist system is much too logical to trouble itself with such incomprehensible problems, and in order to create no false impressions, the teachers surround the last state with the utmost possible uncertainty of expression. The Buddhist yearns to return from the endless whirl and turmoil of existences to the calm of the first beginning.

CHAPTER XII

THE NOBLE ORDER OF THE YELLOW ROBE

000

That noble order of the yellow robe
Which to this day standeth to help the world.

ALL living creatures are plodding on
the noble Eightfold Path which brings to peace;
By lower or by upper heights it goes,
The firm soul hastes, the feeble tarries. All
Will reach the sun-lit snows.

792
775 ●

The monks in Lower Burma are fond of the comparison which steam lends them now. The holy fraternity are pushing on by mail train to the emancipation from constant successions of new births, while the weary layman toils along the dusty road on foot, or at best in a jolting bullock-cart; the mendicant pushes up the stream of life in a huge throbbing paddle steamer; the man yet in the world struggles along painfully against the current, and whirled about by eddies in a rude canoe. Why, then, cannot all set forth on the path alike? Partly because of ignorance and its consequences; partly because of the kan which forms each man's life:

The books say well, my Brothers! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is,
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.

A man's kan may be sufficient to gain him existence as a human being, but not enough to sustain him in the noble life of the monk. He may enter the noble order, he must, indeed, if he would be other than a brute beast; but his kan, the sum of actions that make up his life, the soul of

792 transmigrations, forces him to leave and enter the forest of
● 775 the world, some from want of the gift of continence, some
from ambition and desire for worldly power, some from a
seeking after wealth, all from the predominance of some one
of the hundred and twenty seit that incapacitate a man for
779 the calm meditative life of the pyin-sin.

792 In the Lord Buddha's time, when a man adopted the faith, the requisites were belief in his teaching, a willingness to live in poverty and chastity, and under strict rules. All the applicant had to do was to renounce the ordinary pursuits of life, give up all his goods, take the vows, and he was forthwith a member of the Thengā. From that time forward he lived in poverty, was dependent upon alms for his food, and upon charity for a shelter for his head; he was a beikku, a mendicant, and only those who were such were Buddhists. But as the believers increased, it was evident that all could not wholly adopt the religious life. Many had faith, but not faith enough to support them in the strict rule of the society, and soon Buddhists became divided into the two classes of laymen who adopted and believed in the religious tenets, and the religious who abandoned the world entirely, and strove only to lead the higher life. Hence also arose the hierarchy of the order, which exists to a certain extent in Burma, though very far from approaching the completeness of the system of Thibet, where there is a pontifical court, an elective sacerdotal chief, and a college of superior Lamas. In this respect, however, Burman Buddhism is as much closer to the primitive order in polity as it is in exact observance of the ordinations of the Wini. Theoretically, in the sacred assembly there are but three classes:

792 The shin, the novice, who has put on the yellow robe without becoming a professed member of the order, and probably with no other desire than that of obtaining his "humanity." These are called ko-yins, maung-shins, and a variety of other names.

The u-pyin-sin, those who, having lived a certain time in the monastery, have been formally admitted to the assembly with a prescribed ceremony, whereby the title of yahan is solemnly conferred. These are the pyit-shin, or religious.

Finally, there is the pôngyi, the "Great Glory," who by

778 done in order to legally hand over a gift. As the water
788 falls drop by drop on the ground, the pôngyis read out
431 the formulæ, the substance of which is as follows: "Firm in my belief in the three precious things, the Lord, the Law, and the Assembly, I make this offering that I may be freed from all present and future miseries. May all creatures suffering torment in the four states of punishment reach the happy seats of nat-déwas. May all my relatives, friends, and all men inhabiting this earth and the ten thousand worlds, share in the benefits of this meritorious work. O earth, and ye spirits, guardians of this place, bear me witness to the piety of this gift."

778 It is worthy of note that it is explicitly stated that the
755 inward dispositions of the giver have nothing to do with the
● 775 merit resulting from a good work. The merits are strictly proportioned to the degree of sanctity or perfection of him who receives the alms. Hence the glorious release which awaits an otherwise bad man who erects a pagoda.

778 Zedis are of many shapes and degrees of elaboration,
773 but one common idea may be traced through them all. If
346 you ask a Burman monk the cause of the variations in the form of the payā, he will tell you that the Buddha left no instructions regarding them in the holy books, but had only said that a small mound should be raised over his bones in the form of a heap of rice. Apart from the relation in which the payā stands to the Buddha himself as the representation of the holy one sunk in meditation, the ostensible object is the preservation of relics, and these are to be laid in a shrine, like the lotus-bud of which the zedi is typical, and later by an extending of the lines this got the form of a bell or spire. In the Malla Lingaya Wuttu we are told that the infant Buddha in the womb of Queen Maia resembled a lotus-bud, or a beautiful pagoda, and the conjunction of this idea with the simple original tumulus has undoubtedly led to the typical form as now seen in Burma. The names for various parts of the building all recall the idea of the flower-bud, with its young leaves folded in adoration. Thus the rounded swelling just below the slender spire is called the hnget-pyaw-bu, the banana palm-bud, and on the extreme summit

779 patience; fortitude; wisdom; benevolence; truthfulness; indifference.

The Five Renouncings are the giving up, for holiness' sake, of—children; wife; goods; life; one's self.

775 This cannot all be effected in one existence, unless piety has been exhibited in many previous lives. Much depends on one's kan, the accumulation of merits from past time. Just as the fruits on a tree are some of them good, some bad, but have little or nothing in common with each other, or with those that went before, or may come after, so it is with a man's kan. But the diligent observance of the holy precepts, and especially the exercise of open-handed charity, will always tend to reduce the number of lives to be endured before the deliverance comes.

782
788 Prayer there is none in the technical sense of the word, and the doxologies repeated at the shrines are mostly those learnt in childhood at the monastery school, or special compositions of each individual for himself. There is nothing laid down in any of the Buddhist religious books concerning the formulæ of prayer. Whatever there is, is taken from the Apyin Aung-gyin, the record of the triumph of Shin Gautama over the outer foes, Mān-nat, the spirit of evil, and his daughters, and the Atwin Aung-gyin, the triumph over the inward foes, the kiletha, the passions of mankind. Many, however, repeat little more than the tharana-gōng, the form with which the pôngyis almost invariably commence worship: "I worship the Buddha; I worship the Law; I worship the Assembly." This, with the aneiksa, dôkha, anatta, "change, pain, illusion," forms the sentence to be repeated on the rosary. A very usual form of doxology commonly taught to the scholars of the kyaungs, and therefore retained through life, is the following:—"Awgatha, Awgatha, I worship with the body, with the mouth, and with the mind, with these three kans. The first, the second, the third; once, twice, until three times. The Lord, the precious one; the Law, the precious one; the Assembly, the precious one; these three precious things. I, the worshipper, most humbly, with fervid zeal, with clasped hands, pay reverence, give offerings, and with pious gaze bow me down. Thus by this worshipping I gain merit and

yahanda, and attain Ne'ban. He is a favourite subject for pictures, which represent him sitting under his brazen roof, 527 776
or on the stump of a tree, eating out of an alms-bowl, which he carries in his arms. Sometimes he is depicted gazing sideways up to the skies, where he seeks a place that is not polluted by corpses. Such a spot is not to be found on earth, where every stock and stone is but the receptacle of a departed spirit. [775] ● The notion is like that of the Tibetan monks, who look upon the earth as simply a vast graveyard. They carry human finger-joints strung together for a rosary, eat their food out of a human skull, and instead of horns for trumpets use the bones of a man's forearm. "We are dead," they say, "and dead men have nothing to do with the things of the living."

527 506
Of a similar character to this illuminating of the pagodas, the town, and the river, is the letting loose of fire-balloons, from the end of Lent to the Tawadeintha festival in Tasaungmôn. The balloons are sometimes very big, but they are simple enough structures. A bamboo framework is covered over with the thick, coarse, home-made paper manufactured from the bark of the mahlaingbin (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), which also supplies the material for the black parabaik note-books. At the bottom, across the open mouth of the balloon, is a little platform, on which pitch is heaped, and with torches attached to it. The balloon is then tethered to the ground. The torches and resinous matter are lighted, and when the strain on the stays is considered sufficient, they are cut, and the balloon goes off. They are dangerous in large towns, and are forbidden there, but the Burman considers that the law applies only to the ground round the town, and dozens are let off every year from spots only a hundred yards or so outside of municipal [389] limits. Not unseldom dôn, rockets, and other kinds of fireworks are attached to them, not by any means tending to make them safer for the houses below. This mi-eing byan, as it is called, is in honour of the Sula-mani payā, a pagoda erected in Tawadeintha, over Mount Myinmo, by the Thagya, king of the Nat-déwas. When Prince Theidat left his palace, his wife, and forsook all to become a Buddha, he rode as far as the river Anawma and leaped over it on his famous

are recorded with enthusiasm and delighted precision of 533 detail; and when an hour or so has been passed in this way, 832 a little more rice-husking is done, and the girls set to work 527 getting ready the onions and sesamum seed, and slicing up 521 the cocoa-nut kernels. This sort of thing goes on all the night through. There is half an hour's work, and then an hour of singing and story-telling and gossip; about the great Shinbinthalyaung, the gigantic recumbent image of Shin Gautama dug up lately near Pegu; of the two min-laungs, the embryo kings, who have been revealed there, and the third one, who is foretold by the old theit-sa, the prophecy which declares that he will restore the ancient Talaing kings and revive religion; of the new hti which is being set up on the pagoda of the lotus tank, and its exceeding splendour, each single one of the concentric rings having been assigned as a particular favour to one out of many competing districts. Then there is a discussion as to the [291] new fashion of turbans, the one plain colour with worked flowers on it, which has supplemented the old thinner style with more braid-like patterns; and the present rage for waist-cloths with many-coloured stripes in place of the old wavy and dog's-tooth fashion. Then the girls are rallied about the method in which they dress their hair—all of them in the style just declared treasonable in the upper country. Queen Supayalat has hit upon some particular set, or plaiting of her tresses, which she thinks becomes her very well, and a royal order has come out making it penal for any meaner damsels to adopt the same method. Consequently all the maidens from Taungoo to Kyauk-Hpyu and the A-eng Pass to Malawun have made up after the queenly model and flatter themselves that it is *chic*. There are [775] ● always ghost stories at these gatherings, tales about the three farmer brothers that were killed just after harvest time three years ago, and now haunt the dense patch of swampy jungle down by the creek as nat seins, and sometimes scare the fishermen out of a night's work by the violent agitation of the tree-tops on a still night; and then there is that old [754] hag in the lone house at the far end of the village, who is certainly a witch; it must have been she who gave the old sikkè the tet, poor old man, and he a payā-tagā too, founder

536 539 her go. Everything happened as he had foretold. She met
the prince and he followed her advice. They returned to
the Pyinyawwada country, and all was happy."

536 The above is the merest outline of the story. The piece
is very long, and there is abundance of incident. The
prince's servant, and usually also the two holy men, do the
comic part of the business, but this is always so purely
personal a matter that the printed text can give no real
notion of what actually is said. It serves merely to point
out the lines which the lubyet must follow in his impersonation.
The stage books, written on palm-leaf, contain but
very few detailed speeches, and merely indicate the story,
and throw out hints to the actors. The following is one of
the songs sung by the prince in his wanderings through the
533 forest in quest of Palèthwè. It is written to the tune of the
"Chase in the Tawmawyôn Forest," that in which the king
●[775] goes to hunt in the epic of the Ramayana. The wut or
wutdaw referred to is the penalty of suffering the same
punishment, or death, which has in a former existence been
wrongfully or needlessly inflicted on others. Thus the great
minister, Widuya, spoken of, who was an avatar of the Lord
Buddha, had in a previous life dragged a frog by the leg
so that it died. Hence he is dragged at the tail of the
fierce Nat's horse until he dies himself. The prince fears
that some such evil destiny is working itself out on him.
The jingle of the rhythm is intended. The whole play is
of the "raging rocks and shivering shocks" pattern.

539

FATE

The wind breathes chill
Across the rill
That cuts the forest track;
The haze to mist
Whitens, I wist,
And I am lost, alack.

The branches spread
Dull green and red
Flat o'er the sullen stream;
Comes through the gloom
The gibbon's boom,
And shrill the parrot's scream.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

539

Here or elsewhere,
With praise and prayer
I seek him for my guide.

Ah, still the Wut
Its baleful fruit
Doth bring before mine eyes.
See, bright and clear,
The Saddan mere
And round the mountains rise.

Like jangled chime,
Or tangled rhyme,
The piteous tale is told;
The Saddan Min[1]
By death solves sin
Committed once of old.

Thrice wretched she,
By destiny
Marked out the blow to guide;
She, then as Queen
Thubadda seen
Had erewhile been his bride.

But beauty's curse
Hath made her nurse
Greed most akin to hate;
The milk-white tusk
She sought to busk
With glories six her state.

Then her behest
She hath addressed
To Thawnôtto, the hind;
Fell hunter that,
As Dewadat
Hath felon deeds designed.

---

[1] The Saddan Min is the Celestial White Elephant, an avatar of the Buddha Gautama. Hence it is that white elephants are so revered and regarded as the symbol of universal sovereignty. Thubadda had been the Saddan's queen in a previous existence. She repents, dies of sorrow, when she hears of the Lord White Elephant's end, and afterwards, in consequence, becomes a Yahanda in the time of the revealing of the Buddha. Mèbadda is the actual consort of the Saddan. She became, in after existence, Yathawdaya, the wife of Prince Theidat, before he left the palace and devoted himself to acquiring the Supreme Wisdom. Thawnôtto, the hunter, became the wicked Dewadat, cousin and brother-in-law of the Lord Buddha, and now languishes in Awidzi, suffering punishment for his attempt on the life of Shin Gautama.

775
773

X

Now list ye well 539
What then befell,
And quit your scoffing mood.

Straight to the cave,
Where crouched the knave,
He walks with gentle mien;
Himself bestows
The tusks' white snows
For Thubadda, the Queen.

Ah, cruel Wut,
Why strayed my foot
Unto this hateful spot?
See low I bow
To earth my brow;
Be mine less awesome lot.

Here erewhile trod
The embryo god,
Now all is dull and blear;
O'er land and sea
I seek for thee,
My Princess, even here.

By lonesome lake,
Through forest brake,
I'll track each rumour's breath;
Where roams the bear,
By fierce beast's lair,
I'll seek thee e'en past death.

But, 'gainst the Wut's
Fierce power what boots
To strive with eager zeal?

. . . . .

Peace, doubting heart,
No fate can part
True lovers fond and leal.

As an illustration of a purely religious play may be given the *Nemi Zat*, one of the Ten Great Birth Stories. It is occasionally represented as a yôkthe, or marionette play, but it is rather expensive to put it on the stage well. It was "preached" in the monastery of Meggadawun, during the stay of Shin Gautama in Mèthila, of which country he remembered to have been king in a previous existence. The following is the story in brief:— 536 775

539 In old times the King Mingadeva ruled over the country,
●775 and for many years was entirely given up to pleasure and worldly passions, till one day his barber showed him a grey
[886] hair—"a flag of the king of death," as it is commonly called in Burmese—which he had found on the royal head. The king was struck with this *memento mori*, and immediately saw yawning before his eyes the abyss of mortality. The vision scared him, and he gave up the gay raiment and idle pleasures of earthly glory and wandered into the desert to end his life as a hermit. His self-denying piety gained for him on his death elevation to the seats of the Byammās, and all the 82,000 princes who succeeded him on the throne of Mèthila followed the example of their ancestor and retired into hermits' cells when they felt their end approaching. Mingadeva, from his blissful superior seat, followed with earnest solicitude the fortunes of his dynasty, and when at length he saw that it was drawing near its close, he returned once more to earth. He was conceived in the womb of the then Queen of Mèthila, and was born of her, and received the name of Prince Nemi. From his earliest years, as the pônnas discerned from his horoscope, his mind was firmly and unwaveringly directed to the prescriptions of religion and to pious observances. Once when he felt a doubt in his mind as to whether the outward giving of alms or inward self-contemplation was the more meritorious, the Tha-gyā King himself came down and instructed him that abundant charity would indeed secure him a new birth in the heavens of Nat-déwas, but that only the cultivation of the mind could ensure a rise to the blessed regions of the Byammās. The Déwa King was so attracted by the religious spirit and piety of the young prince that on his return he spoke of it with admiring delight to his subject Nats. Their curiosity was excited by the account of such distinguished qualities in a man, and they begged the Tha-gyā Min to procure for them the acquaintance of so holy a personage. Accordingly the king gave orders to a young Déwa named Matali to descend to the earth and invite the young prince to a visit to the nat-heavens.

It was the day of the full moon, and all the inhabitants of Mèthila were assembled in the streets and on the pagoda

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

539
775 ●

platforms to observe the ceremonies of the holy day, when a great wonder happened. While the full moon shone high and clear in the heavens, there appeared through the clouds a glowing light in the east, so that all the people cried aloud in astonishment that two moons had arisen in the sky at the same time. But as the light gradually neared and neared, it became evident that it was a nat-chariot with the young Déwa inside. Matali advanced to the prince and invited him to enter the car and proceed to the realms of the blessed. Nemi stepped in without fear, and when he was told by the charioteer that there were two ways open to him, of which one led through the horrors of Nga-yè, and the other through the Elysian fields, he at once desired to visit both. First they went down to the eight vast burning chambers, and saw the pains of the damned in the fiery gloom of hell, and then they ascended and viewed the pure delights of bright paradise. After Nemi had met in audience the highest king of Nats, he returned to earth to give to his subjects a true account of what fate would befall them after death, according as they followed the path of virtue or of vice.

After many peaceful and honoured years, when Nemi at last saw his hair begin to grow grey, he, like his predecessors, entered the state of Yahanda and abdicated the royal power. The same venerable custom was followed by his son Thalarazana, the last of the roll of kings, who, when old age began to snow upon them, devoted themselves to the holy order in the town of Yathemyo (Kappilavastu).

536

It is evident that such a play as this, though it offers plenty of incident, is for this very reason the more difficult to put on the stage, and can hardly be satisfactorily produced at all except as a marionette play. No zāt furnishes more subjects to the Burman artist than that of Nemi, and pagoda corridors all over the country are decorated with the scenes in hell, which are much more easily pictured to the mind and the eye than the pure joys of heaven.

CHAPTER XL

THE BUTTERFLY SPIRIT

● 775 It is a matter of common knowledge that Buddhists deny the existence of a soul or spiritual principle in man. Each new being, spiritual nature as well as bodily substance, is the product of what has gone before, and differs entirely from the previous being. That faculty which performs all the actions referred by other religions to the soul is by the 828 Buddhist system placed in a sixth sense called manaw, the 775 heart, or faculty of knowing. This sense is as material in its action as any of the others which are denominated seeing, hearing, tasting, and so on. The manaw is, it is true, the most important of all the senses. The eyes, the ears, all the others, are merely channels to communicate impressions to the purely intellectual faculty of knowing; but it is not a separate something, distinct in composition and existence from the material body. The quality and keenness of perception of the manaw is a matter of serious importance to its owner; for it is only by meditation that a man can attain to the higher heavens, and the act of meditating can only be conducted by the sixth sense. The observance of the precepts and the performance of good actions meet with abundant reward in happy births on earth or in the six heavens of the nat-dewas; but the inward good deeds of the soul are incomparably more meritorious, and therefore the pondering on the lawki seit, the ideas of creatures yet under the influence of the passions, and on the lawkotara seit, which are the ideas of those happy beings who have entered into the current of perfection and move about in the regions of pure spiritualism—the consideration of these and

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

of the seitathit, or results immediately connected with ideas, throughout all the five stages of meditation up to upekka, lead to rewards in the twenty superior heavens, where the contemplative gradually frees himself from the thanya, or false persuasions, and acquires a contempt for matter. 828 775 ●

775 All this action has its place in the manaw, or the seat of knowledge, and is duly explained to the Burman when he is in the monastery school, and afterwards, perhaps, in discourses of the Yahans in the rest-houses on feast-days, or other suitable occasions. Unfortunately, however, the matter is, to say the least, a little obscure, and not by any means easily to be grasped. Accordingly, the superstitious Burman having got a confused lot of big words into his head, after letting them simmer there for a while, evolved from his internal consciousness the notion of the leip-bya, or butterfly spirit.

774 This personation of the soul in a fairy-like form had natural elements of attractiveness in it; and the consequence is that the error of the unphilosophical Burman long ago has grown into a present national belief, and it is universally accepted that the life of man resides in the leip-bya and dies when it disappears. The man at the point of death opens his mouth and the butterfly escapes from the body, but only to die at the same time. Many strange things are explained by this doctrine. For example, the leip-bya is the cause of dreams. It is not absolutely necessary that the butterfly should remain constantly in the body; death will not necessarily ensue from the separation. When the man is asleep, therefore, it leaves the body and roams about far and wide. But in these wanderings it can only go to such places as a person to whom it belongs has previously been in. A straying from known paths would cause extreme danger to the sleeping body, for it might happen that the butterfly would lose its way and never return, and then both would die—the body because the animating principle was gone, the leip-bya because it had no earthly tenement to live in. The butterfly is enabled to perform these journeys through its existence as thwe seit, or soul of the blood; and it is the state of this blood which makes the leip-bya more or less inclined to roam, and directs its movements. If the 774 827

CHAPTER XLV

SLAVES AND OUTCASTS

It is a work of the greatest possible merit to build a pagoda, 554
and the founder, prefixing Payātaga to his signature, for the 775 ●
rest of his life is looked upon as certain to pass into ne'ban
on the completion of this his present existence. Similarly
a man acquires great kutho by repairing portions of one of
the old national shrines, putting up a new umbrella on the
summit, setting the steps that lead up to the platform in
order, or even by simply gilding afresh a few square feet
on a feast day. By doing any one of these things a man
sets his balance of kan on the right side and gains the good 567
opinion of his neighbours. It is, therefore, not unnatural 564
that all foreigners should be struck with the fact that the
regular servitors of the places of worship, those who sweep
the platform, carry off dead leaves, broken branches, and
litter generally, and keep the place in order, are not only
slaves, but are regarded as outcasts with whom the rest of
the community will have no dealings and whose society is
contaminating. Not only is the original parakyun a slave
for life, for no one, not even a king, can liberate him or provide
a substitute in his place, but his descendants, till the
cycle of Shin Gautama's religion shall have come to an end
and all the relics shall vanish from the earth, all his children
throughout the thousands of years that have to elapse, are
fixed and settled slaves of the pagoda from their birth, and
any one marrying a pagoda slave, even unwittingly, becomes
himself, with all the children he may have had by a previous
ife, irremediably a parakyun. The reason no doubt lies in
the conviction of the existence of original sin. It is desirable

564 coffin or digging the grave. This occupation has therefore
767 fallen almost exclusively into the hands of the old parakyun, and helps to keep alive the ancient feeling. It must be allowed that the ways of the sandalās do not in any way tend to conciliate the multitude.

564 Finally there were the pagwet, the letyataung, or thaing-
681 gyaing, the constables, jailers, executioners, lictors, mostly
625 confined to the neighbourhood of the native kingdom Mandalay. These merited all the obloquy that could be cast on them, but their position of quasi-authority made them more secretly hated than openly flouted. They were never allowed to enter a free man's house, even in the exercise of their office; nor could they go within the walls of the palace stockade, but many a citizen smarted under the blows of the lictor's thaing, when a great man came round a corner suddenly, and the letyataung saw a chance for a back-hander with his fasces; and it was far too easy a matter for a man to get into jail in Mandalay to make it a wise proceeding to rail at the pagwet. It was an unlovely custom in Upper Burma which made the executioner both constable and jailer, and condemned him to live on his wits. The natural result was that he lived on the prisoners, and extorted the last pice out of his victim with threats of violence, or actual torture. Pagwet means a circle on the cheek, and this ring on the face implied that its bearer had been condemned for a capital crime, and was respited to become executioner. Others had devices descriptive of their offence tattooed on the chest, as luthat (murderer), thukho (thief), damya (dacoit or highway robber). An execution in Mandalay was a horrid sight. The "spotted man" danced round his victim, made feints with his sword and burst into fits of wild laughter or yells, to shake the doomed man's nerves. It must be admitted that the spectators were very little better. A skilful blow which just slit the skin and drew blood met
[166] with an approving shout. The pagwet, like other outcasts, was buried like carrion when he died, or perhaps was simply thrown out with the town offal.

563 How does all this agree with the theory of Buddhism,
●775 that there is equality for all, and that the poorest man can raise himself to sublimest heights after death? The king

563
775

had and exercised the power of life and death over all his people. He ruled in the truest sense by divine right, and his subjects were all his slaves. The answer is—it is kan, it is the accumulation of merits or demerits in past existences. A man is rich, powerful, and great, because aforetime he was pious and good. Therefore now he has a right to govern and look down with contempt on the poor. The poor man must have been a bad man before he entered on this existence. He deserves to be miserable; he knows it himself, and submits fatuously. It is true the tyrant does not do well if he oppresses him, and perhaps may be punished for it in a later existence, and become the slave of him who, now a slave, may hereafter by good works attain the rank of king. But in his present existence the great man has the fullest right to oppress and grind down the poor as much as he chooses. He enjoys the fruits of previous virtues, and since he has perhaps in many existences mortified the flesh and done grievous penance, he has now a right to enjoy himself to the limit of his desires. Moreover, as he has great power and riches, it is always easy for him by much almsgiving and good works to add so much merit to his kan as to outweigh all his sins, and in the end preserve the balance still in his favour. This is, however, very hard for the poor man. His station exposes him to many temptations to sin. He has but very little to give to the beikku and to the pagodas. He has perhaps even, in order to save himself from starvation, to shoot deer and game, and catch fish, a mode of living which infallibly dooms him to a few millions of years in hell, whence again he has to work up through the upper three states of punishment before he can enter anew upon existence on earth, there to strive to accumulate hard-earned merit, that he may not incontinently topple back again to nga-yè. In any case the poor man's hope can only be directed to the future. From the seeds sown in past worlds, tares have sprung up in the soil of his present existence, and tares they will remain. The germ of a higher life may be sown, but it will only grow up in a new existence. There is happily one refuge for the man born to poverty and misery. It is always open to him to put on the yellow robe of the Assembly of the Perfect, but to do that

563 he must feel himself strong enough to beat down the fire of
● 775 passions and remain steadfast to the end, for a lutwet, a man who has put his hand to the plough and turns back again, exposes himself to infinitely greater danger towards his next existence than he who has remained throughout in the world. The monastery is a house of refuge not to be lightly sought, and, sad to say, even it is not open to the outcast.

775 This doctrine of kan also accounts for the equanimity
181 and callousness with which Buddhists view human misery
761 and the taking of human life, notwithstanding the law which forbids the killing of even the smallest insect. They recognise apathetically the working out of inexorable destiny, and watch a man drowning in the river with undisturbed tranquillity, for they are not called upon or even justified in stirring a hand to prevent it. You cannot combat manifest fate.

564 But the outcast may not in any case enter the monastery, not even as a scholar. Even that last chance is withheld from him. He is the connecting link with the state of animals, the highest state of punishment. He is considered no better than an animal in thought; he meets with less toleration in actual life. Were he bedizened to the eyes with costly silks and priceless jewellery no girl would look at him. His wealth is of no use. He is not allowed to build a pagoda, or even to supply fresh-water pots on a wayside stand. The monk would refuse his alms; the starving free-man beggar would scorn his bounty. They will no doubt gradually disappear under British rule, but there will be those who will regret it. They may have to work hard for their living.

spire. To show the soles of the feet to the throne is high 644
treason. This is awkward for the inhabitants of some [778]
quarters, for there is a rule applying to all Buddhists, that [182]
they must not place their feet towards the east, where the
sun rises and whence the next Buddha, Arimadeya, will
come, nor to the west, where the bawdi bin stands, or stood,
the tree under which Shin Gautama attained the supreme
wisdom. The superstition is probably derived from the
Brahmins, who threaten grievous dangers to the man who
places his feet on the shadow of a dewa, a king, a teacher,
a saint, or another man's wife.

The frequent change of locality of the palace, and therefore 644
of the capital, is a peculiarity of Burma. There are 631
about a score of towns in the country which have been
at one time or other the metropolis. Such are Tagaung,
Old Pagān, and Shwebo, above Mandalay; Prome (under
the title Tharekettara), Pagān, Sagaing, Ava, and Amarapura,
below it. The last two are the best known; indeed
some people to the present day persist in talking of the
"Kingdom of Ava," though that once brilliant capital has
been little better than a jungle for a great many years,
and the lines of the old walls can only be traced with
difficulty.

It is hardly correct to say, as most writers on Burma
have hitherto done, that with a new king there should be a
new capital. This has very frequently been the case, but
the matter does not altogether depend upon the accession of
a new sovereign. It is brought about by a very much more
gruesome (the word is used advisedly) circumstance. On 644
the foundation of a new capital, there are always a certain 631
number of people buried alive. The idea is that they 782
become nat-thein, that their spirits haunt the place where [775] ●
they were put to death, and attack all persons approaching [182]
with malevolent intentions. The notion is entirely due to
the royal astrologers, the Brahmin pônnas, and as being
repugnant to the tenets of Buddhism, is strenuously denounced
by the true brethren of the yellow robe. But it fits in very
well with the popular superstition regarding the existence of
spirits, and has hence always firmly maintained its ground.
It is a matter of common knowledge that this idea of

825 lucky discoverer of a white elephant was made a mingyi, and
643 was exempted from taxes and burdens of every kind for the
554 rest of his life. Red and spotted elephants were also held
in great esteem.

825 White crows, rats, mice, and hares are common and
easily distinguished; but it is different with a white elephant.
He is not to be considered as snow-white: very far from it.
All the white elephants now existing in Siam and Burma
are of a light mouse colour, somewhat of the same tint as
the pale freckles to be found on the trunk of almost every
ordinary elephant. This light grey is uniform all over, the
spots on the trunk being white. The depth of the colour,
however, varies greatly; and there are often blemishes in
the shape of darker patches which would seem to ruin an
otherwise eligible candidate's claims. It has been therefore
found necessary to determine some infallible test points,
which will demonstrate the right of the animal to his title.
Determining white elephants is quite a science, and there is
a very considerable literature on the subject. The Burmese
skilled men fix upon two of these tests as superior to all
others. One is that the elephant shall have five toe-nails
on his hind feet instead of four. This is a good way of
making certain, but occasionally there are indubitably black
● [775] elephants which have the sacred number of toes. These
are white elephants debased by sin, labouring under the
evil kan of previous existences, and therefore ineligible for
the honours accorded to the real animal. The other test is
considered perfectly decisive, no matter what the precise tint
of the skin may be. It is this: if you pour water upon a
"white" elephant he turns red, while a black elephant only
becomes blacker than ever. This is the final test always
resorted to in Mandalay. A swarthy specimen who had
twenty toe-nails and turned red when he was washed would be
forthwith installed in all the honours and emoluments of the
Sinbyudaw, no matter what scoffers might say about his
colour. Such a creature was the last Lord White Elephant
in Mandalay. He would not have been recognised as an
albino by any except those who are learned in the science
and well versed in the voluminous and puzzling minutiæ of
the question. To most people he seemed an impostor, for

CHAPTER LXIV

DEATH AND BURIAL

WHEN a Burman dies, after the first interval of poignant 764 grief on the part of those present, the body is carried to the side of the central room of the house, abutting on the front verandah, and there deposited between the house posts. Messages are then sent to the monastery, to the friends and neighbours, and a funeral band is summoned. Meanwhile the corpse is carefully washed from head to foot, and the two big toes, and usually also the thumbs, are tied together with the chema-gyo and the letma gyo, which, if practicable, should be locks of the hair of a son or daughter; but if this is not to be got, a strip of cotton cloth is used. The whole body then, from the armpits downwards, is closely swathed in new white cotton cloth, and when this is done the best clothes the deceased possessed are put on. If the family is wealthy the paso or tamein is often very rich and costly. The face is always left uncovered, unless there are special reasons for concealing it, arising from the cause of death. Between the teeth is placed the kado-ka, a piece of gold or [775] silver as ferry-money to pay for the passage of the mystic river, which is known to exist, but concerning which no further particulars are to be got from any Burman. It is no doubt a relic of old demon-worship, the meaning of which is forgotten, while the custom has clung on. Charon's toll of course immediately occurs to the classical reader. Probably the race on their march from their ancestral home to Burma had to cross a big river. If the family is very poor, a copper or lead coin is used, or perhaps nothing more valuable than a betel-nut. The coin, whatever it is, is usually quietly

For seven days after either kind of funeral, mourning 765
goes on in the house. This means in wealthy houses 426
indiscriminate eating and drinking. Cooking goes on all 789
night, and all day relays of condoling visitors come and eat 775
and enjoy themselves. The yahans also come every morning and receive offerings, and recite a string of Pali sentences. Friends bring contributions towards all this expenditure, but the result of it too often is that the heir finds that not only are all his father's hoarded rupees gone, but he himself has contracted a very considerable burden of debt. Even in the case of poor people, where the feasting is limited to the seventh day, great expense is incurred. The yahans are as necessary then as at the funeral, for the house must be purified, and the evil spirits who may be hanging about, as well as the leip-bya of the deceased, have to be exorcised and driven away. Then the pot containing the bones, if the dead person was burnt, is taken to the graveyard and buried, or sometimes is put into a hole near the pagoda. Superstitious people at burials sometimes affirm that they have caught the "butterfly" of the deceased in a handkerchief, and take this home to the house, where it lies till the seventh day, when it is opened after the discourse of the yahans, and the leip-bya is driven from the house. It can then give no more trouble.

Sometimes a small pagoda is erected over the cremated 764
ashes of a highly respected relative. These are regarded 778
simply as monuments, even when they are over a king, to whom alone of laymen in Native Burma they could be erected. They must not be used as places to offer worship, and that this may be known, the members of the sacred order ordain that such pagodas shall have no hti, no umbrella, on the top. To obviate this it is usual with the builder to dedicate the place to Shin Gautama, and thus at once secure a monument and a hti. Pagodas erected in honour of yahandas, or particularly sainted pôngyis, receive the umbrella of right, and are places very eminently suited for the pious laymen to worship at. Such temple tombs are called ayo sedi, but are not of such frequent erection as they used to be.

In some cases the relations grind down the bones to owder, and mixing this with the wood oil called thitsi, of milk. She is not permitted to read, sew, or to do anything that will 'arouse or stir the blood.' 846

Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their presence proves that the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, traditionally indicated a royal future; today, however, in the absence of royalty in Burma, such marks merely forecast a 'great' future for the child. 787 845

A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations. 775

Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as the child's, from earlier existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them. 854 751

A number of things are done by parents to protect the newborn baby from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a tiger bone should be ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions; some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife similarly placed is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain prayers have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. People should refrain from making admiring remarks about a baby's growth; if they do so, the thread may be left on the baby's wrists to neutralize the harm that may come.

When the stump of the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes. [846]

A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during the nursing period. Certain observances are necessary. The mother must not eat tomatoes at this time, for they may appear in the baby's stools; for the same reason, she must abstain from green vegetables. Any falling out of her hair during the nursing stage is said to be caused by bubbles blown into her by the suckling baby. To prevent the milk supply from drying up, the nursing mother avoids fruits of astringent quality, such as pomegranates and buds of the banyan. She must also take care not to allow milk to fall on the floor and dry. 853

The baby is weaned very gradually, beginning at the age of about nine months to a year in most cases, although some children may be given the breast occasionally up to the age of two or three years. Weaning is facilitated by the mother's application of a bitter substance to her breasts. 862

IV

RELIGION

779 563 The people of Tadagale are overwhelmingly Theravada Buddhist in faith. The exceptions are the Indian minority, who are largely Hindus. There are three Indians who profess Mohammedanism, and three Indo-Burmans and one Pakistani of like faith. Being Burmese and Buddhist are almost identified in the thinking of the majority, as evidenced by the fact that almost all replied 'Burmese Buddhist' to the question, 'To what people do you consider yourself to belong?'

In discussing the religious life of Tadagale, realism calls for emphasis upon actual religious beliefs and behavior, rather than any extended setting down of the formal theology of Buddhism. The latter has been done in any number of specialized works, to which the interested reader may refer. Here we shall refer to Buddhist precepts insofar as is necessary to illuminate religious beliefs and practices of the villagers.

779 577 The Five Precepts or Commandments. Almost all villagers know well the fundamental Buddhist injunctions against the taking of life in any form, the consumption of alcohol, illicit sexual activity, theft, and prevarication. These moral rules are, of course, sometimes breached. In Tadagale, the use of alcohol, sometimes to excess, is perhaps the most notable instance. The 'good Buddhist' does not, however, seem to experience feelings of guilt or pangs of conscience in such matters. Rather, the following of the moral precepts has instrumental value for him, in relation to his accumulation of merit and his reincarnation after death.

779 775 Merit. One's behavior throughout life determines one's store of merit, and this, in turn, determines one's reincarnation after death. Morally proper behavior, such as the following of the five basic commandments of Buddhist faith, is regarded as contributing to one's store of merit and thus enhancing one's state of reincarnation after death. Religious acts, such as making daily offerings of food to the monks, saying prayers, and attending the pagoda festivals on the important sacred days are likewise considered to increase one's merit. Breaking the moral precepts, irreligiousity, acting selfish or quarrelsome, detract from merit and accordingly tend to lower one's state in reincarnation.

775 779 184 Such is about the extent of the average villager's lay conception and understanding of the moral code and the ideas of the afterlife in Buddhism. He has little or no knowledge of the detailed concepts of reincarnation, with its elaborate gradationary ladder leading from the four states of punishment up to the ultimate achievement of Nirvana. Such theological learning is the property of the monkhood and of a few laymen who spent more than the usual few years as pupils in the monastic school.

793 Functions of the Monks. The functions of the Buddhist monks in the village may be conveniently classified as three-fold: formal education; officiation at certain rites; and providing personal advice and guidance to individuals.

792 871 With respect to formal education, the monks of four monasteries close to the village conduct schools which are attended by a considerable number of

114 acquaintance with the theory of their faith as picked
121 up from a book or two—notably, Rhys Davids'
779 'Buddhism' and Bishop Bigandet's book—and from many inconsequent talks with the monks and others. But the knowledge was but superficial, and I was painfully aware that it did not explain much that I had seen and that I saw every day.

So I sent for more books, such books as had been published in English, and I studied them, and hoped thereby to attain the explanations I wanted; and as I studied, I watched as I could the doings of the people, that I might see the effects of causes and the results of beliefs. I read in these
•775 sacred books of the mystery of Dharma, of how
779 a man has no soul, no consciousness after death; that to the Buddhist 'dead men rise up never,' and that those who go down to the grave are known no more. I read that all that survives is the effect of a man's actions, the evil effect, for good is merely negative, and that this is what causes pain and trouble to the next life. Everything changes, say the sacred books, nothing lasts even for a moment. 'It will be, and it has been,' is the life of man. The life that lives to-morrow in the next incarnation is no more the life that died in the last than the flame we light in the lamp to-day is the same that went out yesternight. It is as if a stone were thrown into a pool—that is the life, the splash of the stone; all that remains, when the stone lies resting in the mud and weeds below the waters of forgetfulness, are the circles ever widening on the surface, and the ripples never dying, but only spreading farther and farther away. And all this

seemed to me a mystery such as I could not 775
understand. But when I went to the people, I 779
found that it was simple enough to them; for 771
I found that they remembered their former lives 779
often, that children, young children, could tell who 182
they were before they died, and remember details of that former existence. As they grew older the remembrance grew fainter and fainter, and at length almost died away. But in many children it was quite fresh, and was believed in beyond possibility of a doubt by all the people. So I saw that the teachings of their sacred books and the thoughts of the people were not at one in this matter.

Again, I read that there was no God. Nats 776
there were, spirits of great power like angels, and 779
there was the Buddha (the just man made perfect), 182
who had worked out for all men the way to reach surcease from evil; but of God I saw nothing. And because the Buddha had reached heaven (Nirvana), it would be useless to pray to him. For, having entered into his perfect rest, he could not be disturbed by the sharp cry of those suffering below; and if he heard, still he could not help; for each man must through pain and sorrow work out for himself his own salvation. So all prayer is futile.

And then I remembered I had seen the young mother going to the pagoda on the hilltop with a little offering of a few roses or an orchid spray, and pouring out her soul in passionate supplication to Someone — Someone unknown to her sacred books—that her firstborn might recover of his fever, and be to her once more the measureless

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XVI

WOMEN—III

'For women are very tender-hearted.'
Wethandaya.

562
775

'YOU know, thakin,' said a man to me, 'that we say sometimes that women cannot attain unto the great deliverance, that only men will come there. We think that a woman must be born again as a man before she can enter upon the way that leads to heaven.'

'Why should that be so?' I asked. 'I have looked at the life of the Buddha, I have read the sacred books, and I can find nothing about it. What makes you think that?'

He explained it in this way: 'Before a soul can attain deliverance it must renounce the world, it must have purified itself by wisdom and meditation from all the lust of the flesh. Only those who have done this can enter into the Great Peace. And many men do this. The country is full of monks, men who have left the world, and are trying to follow in the path of the great teacher. Not all these will immediately attain to heaven, for purifi-

562 ● 775 cation is a very long process; but they have entered into the path, they have seen the light, if it be even a long way off yet. They know whither they would go. But women, see how few become nuns! Only those who have suffered such shipwreck in life that this world holds nothing more for them worth having become nuns. And they are very few. For a hundred monks there is not one nun. Women are too attached to their home, to their fathers, their husbands, their children, to enter into the holy life; and, therefore, how shall they come to heaven except they return as men? Our teacher says nothing about it, but we have eyes, and we can see.'

562 792 All this is true. Women have no desire for the holy life. They cannot tear themselves away from their home-life. If their passions are less than those of men, they have even less command over them than men have. Only the profoundest despair will drive a woman to a renunciation of the world. If on an average their lives are purer than those of men, they cannot rise to the heights to which men can. How many monks there are—how few nuns! Not one to a hundred.

562 782 Yet in some ways women are far more religious than men. If you go to the golden pagoda on the hilltop and count the people kneeling there doing honour to the teacher, you will find they are nearly all women. If you go to the rest-houses by the monastery, where the monks recite the law on Sundays, you will find that the congregations are nearly all women. If you visit the monastery without the gate you will see many visitors bringing little presents, and they will be women.

825 It is true that it is part of their great theory of life
779 that the souls of men have risen from being souls of
beasts, and that we may so relapse if we are not
825 careful. Many stories are told of cases that have
775 occurred where a man has been reincarnated as an
animal, and where what is now the soul of a man
used to live in a beast. But that makes no difference. Whatever a man may have been, or may be, he is a man now; whatever a beast may have been, he is a beast now. Never suppose that a Burman has any other idea than this. To him men are men, and animals are animals, and men are far the higher. But he does not deduce from this that man's superiority gives him permission to illtreat or to kill animals. It is just the reverse. It is because man is so much higher than the animal that he can and must observe towards animals the very greatest care, feel for them the very greatest compassion, be good to them in every way he can. The Burman's motto should be *Noblesse oblige;* he knows the meaning, if he knows not the words.

825 For the Burman's compassion towards animals
101 goes very much farther than a mere reluctance to
kill them. Although he has no command on the subject, it seems to him quite as important to treat animals well during their lives as to refrain from taking those lives. His refusal to take life he shares with the Hindu; his perpetual care and tenderness to all living creatures is all his own. And here I may mention a very curious contrast, that whereas in India the Hindu will not take life and the Mussulman will, yet the Mussulman is by reputation far kinder to his beasts than the Hindu. Here the

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XXII

THE POTTER'S WHEEL

> 'Life is like a great whirlpool wherein we are dashed to and fro by our passions.'—*Saying of the Buddha.*

779 761 182 IT is a hard teaching, this of the Buddha about death. It is a teaching that may appeal to the reason, but not to the soul. That when life goes out, this thing which we call 'I' goes out with it, and that love and remembrance are dead for ever.

It is so hard a teaching that in its purity the people cannot believe it. They accept it, but they have added on to it a belief which changes the whole form of it, a belief that is the outcome of that weakness of humanity which insists that death is not and cannot be all.

Though to the strict Buddhist death is the end of all worldly passion, to the Burmese villager that is not so. He cannot grasp, he cannot endure that it should be so, and he has made for himself out of Buddhism a belief that is opposed to all Buddhism in this matter.

775 He believes in the transmigration of souls, in the survival of the 'I.' The teaching that what survives

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775

is not the 'I,' but only the result of its action, is too deep for him to hold. True, if a flame dies the effects that it has caused remain, and the flame is dead for ever. A new flame is a new flame. But the 'I' of man cannot die, he thinks; it lives and loves for all time.

He has made out of the teaching a new teaching that is very far from that of the Buddha, and the teaching is this: When a man dies his soul remains, his 'I' has only changed its habitation. Still it lives and breathes on earth, not the effect, but the soul itself. It is reborn among us, and it may even be recognized very often in its new abode.

And that we should never forget this, that we should never doubt that this is true, it has been so ordered that many can remember something of these former lives of theirs. This belief is not to a Burman a mere theory, but is as true as anything he can see. For does he not daily see people who know of their former lives? Nay, does he not himself, often vaguely, have glimpses of that former life of his? No man seems to be quite without it, but of course it is clearer to some than others. Just as we tell stories in the dusk of ghosts and second sight, so do they, when the day's work is over, gossip of stories of second birth; only that they believe in them far more than we do in ghosts.

A friend of mine put up for the night once at a monastery far away in the forest near a small village. He was travelling with an escort of mounted police, and there was no place else to sleep but in the monastery. The monk was, as usual, hospitable, and put what he had, bare house-room,

[574]
[792]

775 at the officer's disposal, and he and his men settled down for the night.

792 521 After dinner a fire was built on the ground, and the officer went and sat by it and talked to the headman of the village and the monk. First they talked of the dacoits and of crops, unfailing subjects of interest, and gradually they drifted from one subject to another till the Englishman remarked about the monastery, that it was a very large and fine one for such a small secluded village to have built. The monastery was of the best and straightest teak, and must, he thought, have taken a very long time and a great deal of labour to build, for the teak must have been brought from very far away; and in explanation he was told a curious story.

792 It appeared that in the old days there used to be only a bamboo and grass monastery there, such a monastery as most jungle villages have; and the then monk was distressed at the smallness of his abode and the little accommodation there was for his school—a monastery is always a school. So one rainy reason he planted with great care a number of teak seedlings round about, and he watered them and cared for them. 'When they are grown up,' he would say, 'these teak-trees shall provide timber for a new and proper building; and I will myself return in another life, and with those trees will I build a monastery more worthy than this.' Teak-trees take a hundred years to reach a mature size, and while the trees were still but saplings the monk died, and another monk taught in his stead. And so it went on, and the years went by, and from time to time new monasteries of bamboo were built and

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

rebuilt, and the teak-trees grew bigger and bigger. 792
But the village grew smaller, for the times were troubled, and the village was far away in the forest. So it happened that at last the village found itself without a monk at all: the last monk was dead, and no one came to take his place.

It is a serious thing for a village to have no monk. To begin with, there is no one to teach the lads to read and write and do arithmetic; and there is no one to whom you can give offerings and thereby get merit, and there is no one to preach to you and tell you of the sacred teaching. So the village was in a bad way.

Then at last one evening, when the girls were all out at the well drawing water, they were surprised by the arrival of a monk walking in from the forest, weary with a long journey, footsore and hungry. The villagers received him with enthusiasm, fearing, however, that he was but passing through, and they furbished up the old monastery in a hurry for him to sleep in. But the curious thing was that the monk seemed to know it all. He knew the monastery and the path to it, and the ways about the village, and the names of the hills and the streams. It seemed, indeed, as if he must once have lived there in the village, and yet no one knew him or recognized his face, though he was but a young man still, and there were villagers who had lived there for seventy years. Next morning, instead of 792
going on his way, the monk came into the village 775
with his begging-bowl, as monks do, and went round and collected his food for the day; and in the evening, when the villagers went to see him at the

772 monastery, he told them he was going to stay. He
● 775 recalled to them the monk who had planted the teak-trees, and how he had said that when the trees were grown he would return. 'I,' said the young monk, 'am he that planted these trees. Lo, they are grown up, and I am returned, and now we will build a monastery as I said.'

When the villagers, doubting, questioned him, and old men came and talked to him of traditions of long-past days, he answered as one who knew all. He told them he had been born and educated far away in the South, and had grown up not knowing who he had been; and that he had entered a monastery, and in time became a Pongyi. The remembrance came to him, he went on, in a dream of how he had planted the trees and had promised to return to that village far away in the forest.

The very next day he had started, and travelled day after day and week upon week, till at length he had arrived, as they saw. So the villagers were convinced, and they set to work and cut down the great boles, and built the monastery such as my friend saw. And the monk lived there all his life, and taught the children, and preached the marvellous teaching of the great Buddha, till at length his time came again and he returned; for of monks it is not said that they die, but that they return.

775 This is the common belief of the people. Into this has the mystery of Dharma turned, in the thoughts of the Burmese Buddhists, for no one can believe the incomprehensible. A man has a soul, and it passes from life to life, as a traveller from inn to inn, till at length it is ended in heaven. But not

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

till he has attained heaven in his heart will he attain heaven in reality. 775 ●

Many children, the Burmese will tell you, remember their former lives. As they grow older the memories die away and they forget, but to the young children they are very clear. I have seen many such.

About fifty years ago in a village named Okshitgon were born two children, a boy and a girl. They were born on the same day in neighbouring houses, and they grew up together, and played together, and loved each other. And in due course they married and started a family, and maintained themselves by cultivating their dry, barren fields about the village. They were always known as devoted to each other, and they died as they had lived—together. The same death took them on the same day; so they were buried without the village and were forgotten; for the times were serious.

It was the year after the English army had taken Mandalay, and all Burma was in a fury of insurrection. The country was full of armed men, the roads were unsafe, and the nights were lighted with the flames of burning villages. It was a bad time for peace-loving men, and many such, fleeing from their villages, took refuge in larger places nearer the centres of administration.

Okshitgon was in the midst of one of the worst of all the distressed districts, and many of its people fled, and one of them, a man named Maung Kan, with his young wife went to the village of Kabyu and lived there.

Now, Maung Kan's wife had borne to him twin

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775 sons. They were born at Okshitgon shortly before their parents had to run away, and they were named, the eldest Maung Gyi, which is Brother Big-fellow, and the younger Maung Ngè, which means Brother Little-fellow. These lads grew up at Kabyu, and soon learned to talk; and as they grew up their parents were surprised to hear them calling to each other at play, and calling each other, not Maung Gyi and Maung Ngè, but Maung San Nyein and Ma Gywin. The latter is a woman's name, and the parents remembered that these were the names of the man and wife who had died in Okshitgon about the time the children were born.

So the parents thought that the souls of the man and wife had entered into the children, and they took them to Okshitgon to try them. The children knew everything in Okshitgon; they knew the roads and the houses and the people, and they recognized the clothes they used to wear in a former life; there was no doubt about it. One of them, the younger, remembered, too, how she had borrowed two rupees once of a woman, Ma Thet, unknown to her husband, and left the debt unpaid. Ma Thet was still living, and so they asked her, and she recollected that it was true she had lent the money long ago. I did not hear that the children's father repaid the two rupees.

Shortly afterwards I saw these two children. They are now just over six years old. The elder, into whom the soul of the man entered, is a fat, chubby little fellow, but the younger twin is smaller, and has a curious dreamy look in his face, more like a girl than a boy. They told me much about their

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775

former lives. After they died they said they lived for sometime without a body at all, wandering in the air and hiding in the trees. This was for their sins. Then, after some months, they were born again as twin boys. 'It used,' said the elder boy, 'to be so clear, I could remember everything; but it is getting duller and duller, and I cannot now remember as I used to do.'

Of children such as this you may find any number. Only you have to look for them, as they are not brought forward spontaneously. The Burmese, like other people, hate to have their beliefs and ideas ridiculed, and from experience they have learned that the object of a foreigner in inquiring into their ways is usually to be able to show by his contempt how very much cleverer a man he is than they are. Therefore they are very shy. But once they understand that you only desire to learn and to see, and that you will always treat them with courtesy and consideration, they will tell you all that they think.

A fellow officer of mine has a Burmese police orderly, a young man about twenty, who has been with him since he came to the district two years ago. Yet my friend only discovered accidentally the other day that his orderly remembers his former life. He is very unwilling to talk about it. He was a woman apparently in that former life, and lived about twenty miles away. He must have lived a good life, for it is a step of promotion to be a man in this life; but he will not talk of it. He forgets most of it, he says, though he remembered it when he was a child.

775 Sometimes this belief leads to lawsuits of a peculiarly difficult nature. In 1883, two years before the annexation of Upper Burma, there was a case that came into the local Court of the oil district which depended upon this theory of transmigration.

Opposite Yenangyaung there are many large islands in the river. These islands during the low water months are joined to the mainland, and are covered with a dense high grass in which many deer live.

When the river rises, it rises rapidly, communication with the mainland is cut off, and the islands are for a time, in the higher rises, entirely submerged. During the progress of the first rise some hunters went to one of these islands where many deer were to be found and set fire to the grass to drive them out of cover, shooting them as they came out. Some deer, fleeing before the fire, swam across and escaped, others fell victims, but one fawn, barely half grown, ran right down the island, and in its blind terror it leaped into a boat at anchor there. This boat was that of a fisherman who was plying his trade at some distance, and the only occupant of the boat was his wife. Now this woman had a year or so before lost her son, very much loved by her, but who was not quite of the best character, and when she saw the deer leaping into the boat, she at once fancied that she saw the soul of her erring son looking at her out of its great terrified eyes. So she got up and took the poor panting beast in her arms and soothed it, and when the hunters came running to her to claim it she refused.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

'He is my son,' she said, 'he is mine. Shall I give him up to death?' The hunters clamoured and threatened to take the deer by force, but the woman was quite firm. She would never give him up except with her life. 'You can see,' she said, 'that it is true that he is my son. He came running straight to me, as he always did in his trouble when he was a boy, and he is now quite quiet and contented, instead of being afraid of me as an ordinary deer would be.' And it was quite true that the deer took to her at once, and remained with her willingly. So the hunters went off to the court of the governor and filed a suit for the deer.

The case was tried in open court, and the deer was produced with a ribbon round its neck. Evidence there was naturally but little. The hunters claimed the deer because they had driven it out of the island by their fire. The woman resisted the claim on the ground that it was her son.

The decision of the court was this:

'The hunters are not entitled to the deer because they cannot prove that the woman's son's soul is not in the animal. The woman is not entitled to the deer because she cannot prove that it is. The deer will therefore remain with the court until some properly authenticated claim is put in.'

So the two parties were turned out, the woman in bitter tears, and the hunters angry and vexed, and the deer remained the property of the judge.

But this decision was against all Burmese ideas of justice. He should have given the deer to the woman. 'He wanted it for himself,' said a Burman, speaking to me of the affair. 'He probably killed

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

75

it and ate it. Surely it is true that officials are of all the five evils the greatest.' Then my friend remembered that I was myself an official, and he looked foolish, and began to make complimentary remarks about English officials, that they would never give such an iniquitous decision. I turned it off by saying that no doubt the judge was now suffering in some other life for the evil wrought in the last, and the Burman said that probably he was now inhabiting a tiger.

It is very easy to laugh at such beliefs; nothing is, indeed, easier than to be witty at the expense of any belief. It is also very easy to say that it is all self-deception, that the children merely imagine that they remember their former lives, or are citing conversation of their elders.

How this may be I do not know. What is the explanation of this, perhaps the only belief of which we have any knowledge which is at once a living belief to-day and was so as far back as we can get, I do not pretend to say. For transmigration is no theory of Buddhism at all, but was a leading tenet in the far older faith of Brahmanism, of which Buddhism was but an offshoot, as was Christianity of Judaism.

I have not, indeed, attempted to reach the explanation of things I have seen. When I have satisfied myself that a belief is really held by the people, that I am not the subject of conscious deception, either by myself or others, I have conceived that my work was ended.

000

There are those who, in investigating any foreign customs and strange beliefs, can put their finger here

There was one point that puzzled me for a time
775 in some of these stories of transmigration, such as the one I told about the man and wife being reborn twins. It was this: A man dies and leaves behind children, let us say, to whom he is devoutly attached. He is reborn in another family in the same village, maybe. It would be natural to suppose that he would love his former family as much as, or even more so than his new one. Complications might arise in this way which it is easy to conceive would cause great and frequent difficulties.

775 828 I explained this to a Burman one day, and asked him what happened, and this is what he said: 'The affection of mother to son, of husband to wife, of brother to sister, belongs entirely to the body in which you may happen to be living. When it dies, so do these affections. New affections arise from the new body. The flesh of the son, being of one with his father, of course loves him; but as his present flesh has no sort of connection with his former one, he does not love those to whom he was related in his other lives. These affections are as much a part of the body as the hand or the eyesight; with one you put off the other.'

828 Thus all love, to the learned, even the purest affection of daughter to mother, of man to his friend, is in theory a function of the body—with the one we put off the other; and this may explain, perhaps, something of what my previous chapter did not make quite clear, that in the hereafter[1] of Buddhism there is no affection.

When we have put off all bodies, when we have

---

[1] The hereafter=the state to which we attain when we have done with earthly things.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

attained Nirvana, love and hate, desire and repulsion, 828
will have fallen from us for ever.

Meanwhile, in each life, we are obliged to endure 792
the affections of the body into which we may be 828
born. It is the first duty of a monk, of him who is trying to lead the purer life, to kill all these affections, or rather to blend them into one great compassion to all the world alike. 'Gayūna,' compassion, that is the only passion that will be left to us. So say the learned.

I met a little girl not long ago, a wee little maiden 775
about seven years old, and she told me all about her former life when she was a man. Her name was Maung Mon, she said, and she used to work the dolls in a travelling marionette show. It was through her knowledge and partiality for marionettes that it was first suspected, her parents told me, whom she had been in her former life. She could even as a sucking-child manipulate the strings of a marionette-doll. But the actual discovery came when she was about four years old, and she recognized a certain marionette booth and dolls as her own. She knew all about them, knew the name of each doll, and even some of the words they used to say in the plays. 'I was married four times,' she told me. 'Two wives died, one I divorced; one was living when I died, and is living still. I loved her very much indeed. The one I divorced was a dreadful woman. See,' pointing to a scar on her shoulder, 'this was given me once in a quarrel. She took up a chopper and cut me like this. Then I divorced her. She had a dreadful temper.'

It was immensely quaint to hear this little thing

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775 discoursing like this. The mark was a birth-mark, and I was assured that it corresponded exactly with one that had been given to the man by his wife in just such a quarrel as the one the little girl described.

The divorced wife and the much-loved wife are still alive and not yet old. The last wife wanted the little girl to go and live with her. I asked her why she did not go.

'You loved her so much, you know,' I said. 'She was such a good wife to you. Surely you would like to live with her again.'

'But all that,' she replied, 'was in a former life.'

Now she loved only her present father and mother. The last life was like a dream. Broken memories of it still remained, but the loves and hates, the passions and impulses, were all dead.

Another little boy told me once that the way remembrance came to him was by seeing the silk he used to wear made into curtains, which are given to the monks and used as partitions in their monasteries, and as walls to temporary erections made at festival times. He was taken when some three years old to a feast at the making of a lad, the son of a wealthy merchant, into a monk. There he recognized in the curtain walling in part of the bamboo building his old dress. He pointed it out at once.

This same little fellow told me that he passed three months between his death and his next incarnation without a body. This was because he had once accidentally killed a fowl. Had he killed it on purpose, he would have been punished very much

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775

more severely. Most of this three months he spent dwelling in the hollow shell of a palm-fruit. The nuisance was, he explained, that this shell was close to the cattle-path, and that the lads as they drove the cattle afield in the early morning would bang with a stick against the shell. This made things very uncomfortable for him inside.

It is not an uncommon thing for a woman when about to be delivered of a baby to have a dream, and to see in that dream the spirit of someone asking for permission to enter the unborn child; for, to a certain extent, it lies within a woman's power to say who is to be the life of her child.

There was a woman once who loved a young man, not of her village, very dearly. And he loved her, too, as dearly as she loved him, and he demanded her in marriage from her parents; but they refused. Why they refused I do not know, but probably because they did not consider the young man a proper person for their daughter to marry. Then he tried to run away with her, and nearly succeeded, but they were caught before they got clear of the village.

The young man had to leave the neighbourhood. The attempted abduction of a girl is an offence severely punishable by law, so he fled; and in time, under pressure from her people, the girl married another man; but she never forgot. She lived with her husband quite happily; he was good to her, as most Burmese husbands are, and they got along well enough together. But there were no children.

[683]

After some years, four or five, I believe, the former lover returned to his village. He thought

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775 that after this lapse of time he would be safe from prosecution, and he was, moreover, very ill.

He was so ill that very soon he died, without ever seeing again the girl he was so fond of; and when she heard of his death she was greatly distressed, so that the desire of life passed away from her.

It so happened that at this very time she found herself enceinte with her first child, and not long before the due time came for the child to be born she had a dream.

She dreamt that her soul left her body, and went out into space and met there the soul of her lover who had died. She was rejoiced to meet him again, full of delight, so that the return of her soul to her body, her awakening to a world in which he was not, filled her with despair. So she prayed her lover, if it was now time for him again to be incarnated, that he would come to her—that his soul would enter the body of the little baby soon about to be born, so that they two might be together in life once more.

And in the dream the lover consented. He would come, he said, into the child of the woman he loved.

When the woman awoke she remembered it all, and the desire of life returned to her again, and all the world was changed because of the new life she felt within her. But she told no one then of the dream or of what was to happen.

Only she took the greatest care of herself; she ate well, and went frequently to the pagoda with flowers, praying that the body in which her lover

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

was about to dwell might be fair and strong, worthy of him who took it, worthy of her who gave it. 775 ●

In due time the baby was born. But alas and alas for all her hopes! The baby came but for a moment, to breathe a few short breaths, to cry, and to die; and a few hours later the woman died also. But before she went she told someone all about it, all about the dream and the baby, and that she was glad to go and follow her lover. She said that her baby's soul was her lover's soul, and that as he could not stay, neither would she; and with these words on her lips she followed him out into the void.

The story was kept a secret until the husband died, not long afterwards; but when I came to the village all the people knew it.

I must confess that this story is to me full of the deepest reality, full of pathos. These stories seem to me to be the unconscious protestation of humanity against the dogmas of religion and of the learned. However it may be stated that love is but one of the bodily passions that dies with it, however, even in the very stories themselves, this explanation is used to clear certain difficulties, however opposed eternal love may be to one of the central doctrines of Buddhism, it seems to me that the very essence of this story is the belief that love does not die with the body, that it lives for ever and ever, through incarnation after incarnation. These stories are the very cry of the agony of humanity. 000

'Love is strong as death; many waters cannot quench love'; ay, and love is stronger than death. Not any dogmas of any religion, not any philosophy,

quiet), the time when the children become quiet from 7 to 8. 512
9 to 10 p.m. is known as THATKYI-KAUNG-CHA (oldage-head-drop) when 805
the elders begin to nod; from 11 to midnight and beyond is LUKLIN-PYAN- 513
CHAIN (Bachelors'-return-time) when young men complete their carousing and
return to sleep. AYO (dawn) comes at the second cocks'crowing (first
is at mid-night) about 4 o'clock. The KALA-DET (Indians-marching in)
hollow wooden drum is struck in the phongyi-kyaungs at this time to
awaken the village. The women who prepare breakfast, and the old
folks who rise to worship appear at this time - but others may sleep
on for an hour or so.

It is obligatory to wash the legs and feet before retiring. In 513
warm weather a mat is preferred for coolness - but in colder and [515]
damp weather a mattress is considered necessary for protection. 782
Prayers taking from 2 minutes (most) up to considerably longer are 828
generally said before bed-time. These praise Buddha and include
such supplications as "may I be lifted up to heaven soon." Dreams
may be good or bad according to the disposition of the nats. Certain
dreams have meanings applicable as omens. It is during sleep that [775]
the ghost of a recently departed loved one contacts the sleeper and,
sometimes, succeeds in luring him away permanently.

Analysis of home standard in Pathwe and in Refugee Camp. 511

The Pathwe home was in nearly every way superior to refugee 722
camp home. Let us examine the nature of this superiority and attempt 342
to see the adjustment which U Myaing made in the refugee camp. The
Pathwe home was an independent unit as compared to the refugee camp
apartment-like home. However we may not assume that U Myaing found
this a disadvantage, since living in Pantanaw was "close". The
quarters in the one case were separated by half a dozen feet and on
the other by a bamboo partition. An important difference is that the
Pathwe home was owned by U Myaing and he had inalienable rights there,
whereas the refugee camp apartment was loaned to him for a short time
period.

Only about one-fiftieth of the space was available in the refugee 511 722
camp (15,050 cubic feet in Pathwe, 315 cubic feet in camp.) However, 361 342

461
the husband is too old to work. Aged parents are invariably respected 554
but those who can still support themselves are "worshipped". Parents 454
do not rely on their sons who have their own families to support but feel 888
that their daughters will always "bring them a cup of curry". 461

The third urge is to have wealth to donate to the Buddhist church. 554
This is regarded as a sound investment since it not only brings a most 735
satisfying honour especially in old age (to be a "pagoda giver") but 775 ●
also counts as merit credited to the individual's account in eternity.

Competition is keenly felt between individuals and families of 565
the same occupation group or adjacent groups but not between the lower 477
and upper classes. An exception is where family traditional land has 554
changed hands - and hard feelings may persist. A carpenter's family 461
does not envy and covet the riches of a government official's family.
His lot is due to KARMA and even if he wished to attain such fortune it
would be beyond his abilities. More important, it is not expected of
him. So the carpenter is content with cheap jewelry for his women and
an occasional gold coin - but the pattern is the same as for the upper
class. However among the individuals and families of an occupation
level there is much rivalry for the benefits wealth can bring. It is
a point of pride to have the largest diamonds at a social function ,
and to give the biggest pa[illegible]. Wives brag that their husbands "prevent
the hairs of their hands from singeing" - that they have servants to
cook. Rank and recognition are based on these considerations. 461

The women of the family exert powerful influence in financial matters 562
and are respected for their sound judgement. Women's occupations include 463
cigar manufacturing, pottery making, and especially shop keeping.

The beginning of an enterprise is conditioned by the wisdom of 777
the ancients and especially the date and place which are given by 461
formula in the Burmese calendar. There are YET-RAZA (day king of)
"fortunate days" and PYAD-THADA "unlucky days" . For example the
calendar announces that Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays of a particular
month are fortunate days to begin enterprises, and other days either
unfortunate or neutral. Rangoon sophisticates (but never villagers)
tell such stories as this: Two phongyis travelled by boat ; the first
boarded the boat on a fortunate day to begin travelling. The next day
the boat came to the second phongyi's village. This was an unfortunate

304 The custom is dying out today; but, in the villages, the teen-age boy
562 frequently, on the encouragement of their family submit to the tattoo-
178 ing of a small area on the thigh. These decorations seen when the longyis are wrapped high were regarded as essentiAl and those without them were openly criticized.

[751] A second type of tattooing consisting of potent symbols were, as still are, placed on the inner arm, back, or high forehead as a means of magical protection against harm. Snake, knife, cudgel and bullet proof motifs are common. Young girls frequently have the inner arm tattooed with such a charm.

838 Homo-sexuals are known as MEIN MA SHA ("women-half") and are
826 recognized by their effeminate gestures, "pretty" looks and clothing. They frequently wear THANAKHA face powder, tie their longyis in a simple tucked-in fold, and wear jewelry like the women. They are rare in villages but have banded together into a society in Rangoon. They appear to be tolerated but are scorned.

It is belcived that individuals known as MIN-TEE-PON-LAIN-HNEH-PON-LAIN ("Female sex- 2 sexes") exist . These persons are supposed to be alternately a man for one month, and a woman for the following
[775] month in a complete process of transformation. Both the MEIN MA SHA and these individuals result from illicit seduction activities in a previous existence - the MEIN MA SHA being the less sinful of the two

792 The PONGYI dress consist of orange cotton cloth - one garment
291 being a longyi with a folled tie at the waist; the other a wide band
293 drapped as a robe. When begging the PONGYIS have a special arrangement of the robe which wraps the left arm and covers the neck region. The nuns wear a robe garment over a long sleeved KINGYI jacket of the same colour. They are frequently seen with a scarf folded on the head. Both orders carry orange-cloth (lacquered) parasols on long bamboo shafts, a string of beads and large palm leaf fans. The Pongyis carry leather bags suspended on a shoulder strap for personal effecjs. PONGYI slippers have a square toe, are made of stiff leather with reinforded soles.

[887] Religious women (including old women) wear chocolate coloured HTAMEINS, KINGYIS and carry a PUWA (a narrow scarf 4 of 5 feet in

Menopause: MEE YAT THWAY SOME (Woman Disorder-Blood End). 886
Daw Aw Zar reached her climacteric at the age of 50. She did not suffer from menopause symptoms, as she had taken the following preventative measures: she had eaten boiled duck eggs three at a time, and very frequently. Kyauk-Hpayon fruit jam was eaten all the time (since 25 ticals of jam can be offered on the altar and can then be eaten to last for 10 days. Phalaung-taung-hmwe root is thinly sliced, mixed with 25 ticals of palm jaggery, 6 pice worth of the 5 kinds of Hsa-mon seeds, and some salt, brewed together and taken. Also, each about two fingers small, were boiled and eaten with rice. Daw Aw Zar ate all these things until the age of 60. 757

Smallpox: (Preventatives). The Burmese preventative measure for smallpox consists in rubbing the whole body in horse sweat and drinking mare's milk. The liver of the python is mixed with water and taken internally. Python flesh is also eaten and python skin is burnt and the ash mixed with jaggery (palm sugar) and made into pills to be taken orally. This is quite effective, and even if smallpox does come on later, it only does so in a mild form, as in the case of two of U Myaing's children who had only about 15 pustules each. U Myaing applied the preventatives. He tells us that practioners can shift the location of pustules. A pustule about to appear on the eyes of a child can be shifted elsewhere by using the tongue of the mother. 757

Medical injections-Vaccination and Cholera. Back in Pantanaw the English vaccinator came around only once in about three years, and consequently the children have been vaccinated only once in their lives. This, however is a service which is rendered free of charge. The youngest child has been vaccinated once here. The same remarks hold true for cholera injections also, except that every one in the family including the adults, have had only one inoculation each in their whole lives.

Cleanliness. For bathing, U Myaing's family uses the hydrant in the camp twice a day. The soap which is used for washing clothes is also used on the body. In Pantanaw the river was used twice a day, and they had special soap for the body. In the camp clothes are washed every day because of their small number. In onemonth, the family uses up thirty cakes of soap each worth 2 annas, for bathing and washing. Teeth are cared for by cleaning them every morning with either salt or charcoal. This is true both of Pantanaw and refugee camp. It involves no special cost. In Pantanaw, the water used was water from the stream. This water was very clear, but it was also filtered before being used. In the refugee camp here the water is very clear and is used as it comes from the hydrant 515 296

Warts: KATO. The cure for warts is to kill the mother wart by prodding it with some sharp instrument or pinching it away slowly. 757

An important factor in the health of the family has been the 753
supernatural. Daw Aw Zar was completely serious in informing us 775
that the reason she was in good health at 72 years of age was thatshe had been good in a previous existence. This idea is apparently tied to the concept of merit acquisition in which the deeds of the present existence add to or subtract from the well being of the future existence. U Myaing states it in this manner:

"The good in this life is because of the meritorious acts in the previous existence."

776 of the villagers. The head-nat, the guardian of the village, replies
753 with accusations that "the whole village has forgotten me", boasts of
688 his powers to punish and is finally molified. In Rangoon there are
672 professional nat-givers who parade the streets with a cart bearing the
782 image of "the conquerer of the salty waters" (special nat of entrepreneurs). For a few annas he will make offerings to the nat and releive
[463] the busy townspeople of this task.

776 The arrangement is a mutual one where the people enjoy freedom
782 from oppressions in return for certain concessions. This phenomenon closely parallels the traditional relationship between the rulers and the ruled in Burma. In a real sense the nat concept serves the function of allowing the Burmese a sense of control over catastrophic forces which do not fall into any other system (as secular, political,
[177] personal relationships, cosmology.). It is this system of controls that the western scientific system most immediately competes with. The administrative and entrepreneur class of Burmese especially in Rangoon say they "Do not believe" in nats. But it is usual for most individuals no matter what their western background to apply to nats in cases of ill fortune "just in case".

●775 THAYEH (Ghosts) generally are a group of supernatural spirits closely related to nats in their origins but with a different set of properties. These are "recently" deceased individuals whose crimes and sins while on earth or manner of death condemn them to an eternity of wandering and mischief-making. Actually, each person becomes a ghost at death but is ordinarily released from earth at the moment of the internment of the copse for judgement in heaven. Those who die of
[761] "raw death" become ghosts. These include: death in childbirth, by wild animals (especially tigers), instant deaths by dahs as in warfare, or by hanging. In Maung Maung Than's village a prominent ghost is U Me Gyi (Mr. Blacky) a very sinful fellow who lived 50 or 60 years ago in the village. His complexion is quite black and horribly distorted. He inhabits a banyan tree and specializes in causing infant illness. Offerings of rice at the tree pacifies him. Ghosts are forces for evil only - evil of the more irritating and less important kind.
751 Older people wear red and white coloured strings about their necks as a protection against ghost evils. It is very common to wear a LET-PHET

(arm-tie) charm consisting of a small metal tube bound about the upper 751
arm or neck and containing an inscription written by a pongyi on silver
or aluminum foil. Once a year, after new years (in March), a PAYA-YUDA 775
(prayer-recite) ceremony is held. At this time pongyis recite 792
the precepts of Buddha for the benefit of the ghosts - who "become 755
hot and run away". Younger people, especially children, are susceptible
to being possessed by ghosts. At this time they "throw fits" and
are uncontrolable. Under the supervision of a pongyi the ghost is
cast out by means of threats and beatings administered to the person
of the possessed one. Beatings are severe and continuous often
lasting an hour, until the ghost says he is "afraid" and departs.
The possessed one, thus cured, does not later complain of rough treatment
since this is borne by the invading ghost. Perhaps this relates
to the less formulated, "nameless horrors" of unseen and unaccountable
forces that cause otherwise unexplainable events - which concept pervades
much of western thought to this day.

A major difference between nats and ghosts is that ghosts cause 775
only harm while nats are ordinarily beneficial in the manner described 776
above. Ghosts may also be controlled for evil purposes against 789
individuals in a variety of black magic. The specialists in black 791
magic are PAH-YOH-GA-SAYA (influence-masters) of black magic or "lower
- "upper root" (heaven) masters combat the "lower root evil"
root", (hell-evil), who administer the evil influence. Witches also
have personal magic powers that allow them to cause harm to an individual
by introducing foreign matter such as lumps of meat, hair balls,
into the body of the victim. It is never known for sure who the witches
are but old women of peculiar habits, and especially of the fishermen's [463]
group, are suspected. Such individuals are considered generally
malivalent and special precautions are needed to avoid offending them.
The inflnence masters, however, are well known and receive gift-fees
for performing services either of causing or controlling black magic
influences. Both groups, but especially the influence masters of the
lower root control ghosts for their purposes.

A major means of securing control of a ghost or "ghost-rearing" 775
is to get the finger bone of a recently deceased person who died a 789
"raw death". Incantations said over the bone insures the obedience of

775 789 the ghost who must then render services as requested. "To rear ghosts is like keeping a cobra in the pocket" indicates the delicate relationship between captive ghost and master. An individual with a grudge against another for real or imaginal offenses will frequently secure the services of an influence master and his "pet ghost". When the victim feels the effects, as in cases of sudden illnesses such as appendicitis, heart trouble, or fainting spells, his family contacts another influence master (upper root type) to, by incantations, cast out the ghost from the victim. This results in a secret contest of magic between the influence masters involved.

791 789 606 In actual practice no influence masters admit to rearing ghosts and the first-cause aggressor does not indentify himself as such. Influence masters play an important part in differencew between affinal families. In this case the mother-in-law constantly competes with her son's wife for the attentions of the son. The mother will notice the lack of attentions, or monetary support of the son and his corresponding infatuation for his wife. She will claim that the wife is exercising magical control (usually through food) on the son. An influence master is applied to in order to control this evil influence by incantations, medicine, candles, and always an ingredient of money. When the wife's family understands what is happening they will also secure the help of another specialist to counteract the influence. The son is thus torn between the two forces. He is at first oblivious to this but later becomes uneasy in mind. If the strain on the son is too severe the mother may give in and the difference resolved on her part - whereupon the son continues in his former course. Often he will berate both groups saying " I am only normal, you are foolish to involve yourselves in a dispute". Sometimes the mother wins and the son thanks her for inteveing and saving him. Another common situation is where a wife seeksto control the influence of another woman on her husband (when he pilanders). In this case the forces are directed against the woman, who is to blame, and not the man.

369 777 789 In the town centers the decline in one's fortunes is often blamed on the evil influence of one's rival. It is said that administrative

782 the well being of his family, for riches and the absence of privation and penury. He desires Nirvana. He prays that all the creatures inhabiting the 36 worlds may be infused with love for each other. [775] "Even if I change existence, may I be born into a better existence. It would not be a better existence if I were to become a cat or some other animal."

782
776 Daw Aw Zar prays that she may meet with good people and not meet up with enemies; that she may be enabled to meet the high-minded and avoid wicked people. Ma Aye Myaing's prayers are about the same as Daw Aw Zar, but she adds that she may be able to give charities liberally in this and successive existences.

In Pantanaw U Myaing prayed for the same things that he prays for now in camp. There he took life and had to expiate the demerit acquired from taking the lives of fish, with the merit accumalated through charities and other meritorious acts. He took some consolation in the fact that he did not take part personally in the killing itself but only gave directions, and even when, in those years in which he had to buy live fish from the IW workers, the fish poured into his boat died of their own accord and so no blame could be attached to him. He did not beat them to death. He believes that although fishermen have a bad reputation as people who take lives, that does not mean that the one necessarily implies the other. However, he concedes that he may be blamed for directing the killing to take place. He was not sure, and so he goes ahead with his charities.

Observations of Aspects of Life in Rangoon.

369
776 In Pathwe they had pigs killed occasionally for pork but it did not greatly disturb him. The mass slaughter of pigs in Rangoon apalled him as being a very gruesome affair. Fifty to sixty animals were lined up in the slaughter house on the occasion he witnessed such a killing. The slaughterers were Chinese and they took the squealing pigs, despatched them and handed them over to others who dip them in boiling water to clean off the hair, and this happened even if the pigs were not quite dead as yet. U Myaing thinks they must be getting a lot of demerit.

593 husband's kinfolk. Post-marital residence is independent and is decided very
[591] largely on the basis of economic opportunity. The wife's opportunities for social
intercourse with her family of orientation are, of course, greatest when residence
is established in her home village; if, however, a couple from different villages
marry and find it most opportune to settle in the husband's community, the
[574] chances are that the wife will maintain contact with her family of orientation by
[582] visits from time to time; such marriages seldom unite persons from villages that
are very far apart. The very structural features of bilaterality and absence of
extension militate against inequality and male domination.

Burmese culture is frequently remarked for the equality of the sexes, in con-
562 trast to the neighboring cultures of India and China. This status of the sexes
593 seems to be the resultant historically of two patterns of thought. One is an apparently very old, pre-Buddhist emphasis upon equality, involving equal inheri-
[428] tance, equal sharing of the property brought to the marriage, equal division of
[586] property upon divorce, a prominent female role in social and economic life, and
an absence of transmission of surnames. The other thought pattern dates from
the superimposition of Buddhism upon older Burmese conceptions: whatever
[177] ideas of male superiority exist in Burmese life stem from Buddhist notions of
● [775] reincarnation. Although Buddha never expressed himself explicitly on the matter,
it is taken for granted that only a male can attain Nirvana, since Gautama
Buddha, who attained that state, was a male.

462 In the family household the wife's role includes not only such routine tasks as
592 the preparation of food and serving of meals, keeping the house orderly and
clean, and looking after small children; very often it involves control of the family income and the making of all important decisions as to expenditures.

Certain observances and taboos, reflective of deference to males, are expected
593 of the female partner in marriage. She is careful that her lower garments do not
784 touch her husband's bed or his personal belongings; she avoids touching her husband's head. It is believed that the breaking of such taboos may ruin the husband's success and glory, especially his spiritual attainments. These injunctions
are followed as a matter of course by Burmese wives and will be broken deliberately only as an act of spite by a woman who wishes to harm or lower her husband
for some reason.

593 Despite the various equalitarian aspects of husband-wife relations, there is
837 a tendency towards a double standard of sexual behavior. A husband who has
reason to believe that his wife is engaging in extra-marital affairs is very likely
[586] to display violent anger, beat her, and break up the marriage. The wife of a

23: Brant & Mi Mi Khaing E, 1-5 (1949-1950) 1951
AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

787 Omens are read from the position of mongoloid spots on the newborn baby's
body. They are said to represent marks put on in a previous existence and their
826 presence proves the child was then a human being. A blue spot on the foot presages a life of travel. Any marks leading from the right shoulder to the left hip, the line that the royal riband takes, indicate a royal future; today, however, with no royalty in Burmese society, such marks merely forecast a "great" future for the child.

● 775 A child is constantly watched from the time of birth for signs of whose reincarnation it represents. This is a constant topic in the family conversations.

826 Any disfigurement in a newborn child is regarded as a carry-over of the parents' store of demerit, as well as that of the child, from previous existences. It is regarded with a sense of shame and sorrow.

845 Although multiple births are neither preferred nor desired, they are not looked upon with any marked anxiety nor are there any supernatural means employed to prevent them.

In the event of a stillborn baby, the corpse is given special treatment. It is
766 kept in a case, clothed and powdered, and a tray of food is set in front of it every day. It is considered auspicious to care for a stillborn child in this manner: the spirits will guide the parents in their dreams toward the attainment of material prosperity.

For the normal baby who survives, a number of things are done by Burmese
751 parents to protect it from malevolent influences. Before it is a month old, a
854 tiger bone is ground on a stone, together with a little water, and mixed with
[825] honey. This is fed to the child to ward off a mysterious infant illness associated
with the tiger. A connection is believed to exist between the tiger and convulsions;
[753] some parents place a tiger skin under the mattress of the baby's bed to guard against such illness. A knife placed under the baby's mattress is said to protect against illness in general.

To insure good health and well-being for the child, a white thread over which certain *mantras* have been recited may be given by a Buddhist monk and tied around the baby's wrists. Should a baby be admired by people for its growth, the thread may be left on to neutralize the harm that is believed to result from such expressions.

When the child's umbilical cord has dried and fallen off, it is kept and used
[278] as a medicine for any illness that befalls the child. A little of it is ground up and mixed with water for such purposes.

000 A very close connection is believed to exist between mother and child during

888 To the Burmese, long life is a great blessing and an indication of merit earned. Long life is prayed for and old age greatly idealized.

The ideal aged person is one who has successfully reared a family, has grand-
children and a certain amount of material wealth. The aged are expected to be
887 retiring and unobtrusive in their behavior. They do not go out visiting very
much; they eat less food; and avoid appearing too well dressed or jeweled when
attending religious observances.

An attitude of resignation characterizes the outlook of the aged person in
Burmese society. It is unheard of that aged people should work: a possible ex-
[622] ception is the village headman, who, it is felt, should be a person of long experi-
ence. When aged people live with their children they assume the role of teachers
of their grandchildren. Most of the time of elderly people is spent in activities
centering around the pagodas and monasteries, organizing of religious festivals,
and raising funds for the monks and charities. In fact, they take leading roles
in such activities.

The elderly members of the household arise early to see that rice is cooked for the daily offering to the monks and to insure that the household altar is properly looked after. It is preferable for them to arise before dawn, for to do so is considered very meritorious.

[784] Certain of the taboos that apply to younger people, mostly those connected with death, do not apply to the aged.

761 *Death and Funeral Observances.* To the Burmese, the decline of the human
body is part of the inevitable course of nature. When this occurs the soul must
●[775] leave. The butterfly is the symbol of life: when a person dies, "the butterfly
leaves his body."

763 When death approaches, valuables, such as jewelry, are removed from the person and the death-bed, because people are reluctant to use anything with which a person dies. These things are given to the monastery. A relative chants as the person is dying, to fix his mind upon the truths of Buddhism and to divert it from worldly goods and ties of kinship.

764 As soon as death has occurred, everyone present cries and wails. Before rigor
mortis sets in, relatives bathe the corpse, using a new water pot for the purpose
and pouring the water over the body from foot to head, the opposite direction
from that practiced by the living. If the water pot must be refilled at all, this
[801] must be done an odd number of times. The pot is then put outside the house,
upside down, and anyone outside the family of the deceased may take it. Then

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
788

93. FAMILY OF A BURMAN NOTABLE AT THE SHRINE.

and fruit, gold-leaf laid on the image and its throne. No southern — that is, primitive Buddhist (see Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*) — lodges petitions with an image, as is the practice in countries where Buddhism is choked by fresh growth of the pagan ideas which it had arisen against. The Tibetan expedients are unheard of. Certain Buddhists in Burma, called *Paramát*, dispense with images. The mechanical aid to contemplation is the string of one hundred and eight beads (*badí*). Even the Buddhism of the common herd is no mere veneer, covering a substratum of the ancient animism (p. 186). The precepts of Buddhism are household words. The ideas and language of the race are pervaded by it. The personal aspect just described does not so engross the votary that he misses the doctrine of the Master. At the shrine the worshipper dwells on the *three gems* (*tharanagôn thôuba*)—the BUDDHA, the LAW, the ASSEMBLY, and the other categories of the scheme. The BUDDHA (the Sage) was the supremely-enlightened one, filled with compassion for the subjects of *karma*, who extended to the universe the enlightenment that was the means of his own emancipation. The LAW (*Tayá*, *Tayamá*, Sanskr. *Dharma*, Pâli *Damma*).—By an impersonal cosmic process, sin works suffering and virtue effects deliverance. Re-incarnation is the legacy of sin and continues until the merit (*kûtho*), accumulated in successive
775 births (*bawa*), outweighs the demerit (*ākûtho*). Transmigration does not involve
779 transference of personality with consciousness of preceding states, but the

532

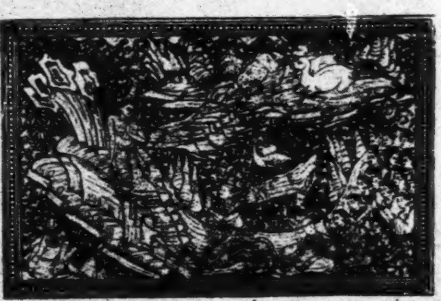
94. MODERN RELIGIOUS SUBJECT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

•775
779

95. FAMILY OF A BURMAN NOTABLE LEAVING THE SHRINE.

continuity of an individual moral account (*Kan*, Pâli *Kamma*, Sanskr. *Karma*); although the Buddha enlightened his disciples about the previous identities of himself, of many other individuals and even lower creatures. Re-incarnation provides the scope for atoning the injustices of individual lives, without debarring the salvation of any. The slowness of the process by which vast results are achieved conforms to the analogy of nature, which does not create, but evolves. The doctrine of *kan* is, in fact, an adumbration of the principle of persistence of force. But instead of regarding the results of actions in a given phase of existence as being separately dissipated, as modern science would imply, they are thought of as combined to form the starting-points of fresh phases of individual existence, until final equilibrium is attained (*Nirvâna*). As a flame results from the concurrence of given antecedent conditions, continues to burn while they are maintained, and is extinguished upon their dispersion, yet not without bequeathing results of its own, so it is with sentiency, which continually becomes the source of fresh desires, of temptation, sin, and consequent suffering. For the avoidance of sin, the five cardinal precepts are given, and precept within precept up to the minute rule of life of the *yahân*. At the root of all evil lies *Ta-hnâ* (Sanskr. *trishna*, thirst, concupiscence). From this fundamental evil [532] proceed the forms *Lawba*, *Dawtha*, *Mawha* (greed, passion, ignorance), in the abstract, absence of *contentment*, absence of *self-control*, absence of *enlightenment*. With the extinction of selfish desire, virtuous conduct ensues, others are



96. THADIYA PRINCE AND PRINCESS DOING HOMAGE TO THE BUDDHA IN A PREVIOUS INCARNATION—WETHANDAYA (SHWEZAWA WORK P. 121).

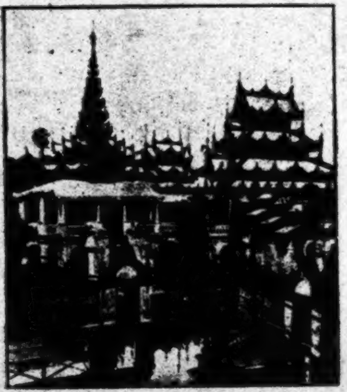
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

775 regarded as oneself, they are loved and are succoured, and by such actions
779 the consequences of sin are atoned for. As imperfections are corrected by self-discipline, crimes are expiated by the pains of hell (*ngayè*). For the perception of the great aim, that is, extirpation of desire and all that desire entails, there are given the principles *Anéissa*, *Dôkka*, *Anátta* (change, trouble, dependence), which the pious ponder as they tell their beads, and which may be paraphrased as the *impermanence* of all things, the *struggle* which the "unpitying rush of changes" involves and the *helplessness* of the event, which is "at the mercy of blind

[778
346]

98. TEMPLE ZAYAT.

[778
346]



99. DECADENT KYAUNG (p. 28).

779 forces." The only certain good within the control of man is the conduct of
his own acts. The final annihilation of desire, attained in the course
775 of lives upon lives of self-discipline, ushers in the serene state of *Nirvâna*
(*Neippan*, Pâli *Nibbán*), in which the subject of *karma* is no longer chained
to forms of existence by any debt of sin. At death is then attained the perfect
condition *Pari-nirvâna*, of which *Nirvâna* was the apprehension in life (Exposition
of Sadáw Û Wuziyama, of Thila-ekkaya *kyaung*). The spiritual stages to
Nirvâna are *Ayahát* and *Ayáttapò*. But it is not claimed for the holiest living
[792] recluse, much less by himself, that one of these stages has been attained.

100. CEREMONY OF YEZETOHA (p. 22).

779 Devotion to the ideal is the utmost. The third of the gems is the ASSEMBLY, "the spiritual family" of the Buddha, or communion of those who adopt to the full the aids towards holy life inculcated by him and who perpetuate his doctrine and example. Nevertheless, life in the world, though unfavourable to attainment of holiness, in nowise debars it.

The Law of Gawdama Buddha is to last for a period of five thousand years, one half of which has elapsed. It is then to be superseded by the law of a new Buddha. The metaphysics of Gawdama are studied by few (see Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, and Huxley, *Romanes Lecture*), but thanks to the network of schools, with which Buddhism has overspread Burma, its practical features are within the knowledge of all.

157. DOMESTIC FLOWER-STAND
(MYAUNG-YE-O, PP. 6, 63).

one, no disability of a practical kind exists 562
for her. But it is the aspiration of every
woman to transmigrate as a man in the [775]
next phase of existence (*bawa*, p. 43).
As the state of a man is thought a more
desirable one, so it is inferred that her [531
life in the previous incarnation has brought 353]
the woman's state upon her. How deep
and tender is the poetry which the idea
of transmigration weaves into the life of
the Buddhist may be judged from the
example at the close of Chapter XXIII.
of *The Soul of a People.* Orphans are [736]
adopted by relatives, and in default of
such, never fail to find foster-parents. The
division of labour between the sexes is [462]
the common one of out-door and in-door.
Wherever circumstances permit, women
are relieved of hardship; the sheltered
places in boats and carts belong to the
women and children. The great middle
zone of commerce is neutral; women embark in wholesale trade, besides
transacting the bulk of the retail trade.
In certain localities women do the lighter
part of the out-door work, and in the
poorer districts of the dry zone they share
in the heavy labour. Women are accorded
precedence among men according to the
standing they have acquired by marriage
or by their independent efforts. The [875]
Kyaungamá—the woman who has founded
and who supports a school—enjoys a
deference on all sides proportioned to [271]
the munificence of her gift. Women mix
freely among men but are never jostled by
them. At great gatherings men and
women group apart. The Burman women [521]
are smart at repartee, and hold their own
in the perpetual banter that goes on
between the sexes.

158. WAYSIDE WATER-STAND IN THE CITY
(PP. 31, 63).

L

166. VILLAGE CHEVAUX-DE-FRISE.

away from the company. In a 576
similar spirit of courtesy a rider dis-
mounts and umbrellas are closed. [349]
Among acts of discourtesy few are
accounted so grave by the Burmans [513
as that of awakening a sleeper. The
reluctance to disturb a sleeper is 775] ●
connected with the belief that the
spirit (*leippya*) leaves the body during
sleep (p. 197). It is looked upon as [152]
a weakness to show resentment and
temper (*dawtha*, p. 44). A visitor 574
in a house is offered a new mat to
sit upon, water to drink, betel to 521
chew, and a spittoon. If it be meal- 437
time he is invited to partake; otherwise he is asked if he has had food, and refreshment is brought. Although the quota of leisure that falls to everyone is greater in Burma than anywhere else, owing to the wide-spread prosperity of the inhabitants, there is perhaps no country in which every man, woman, and child is less exempt from business concern. Thus it happens that after a few commonplaces, conversation inevitably gravitates to business—prices, harvests, prospects. Next in interest come the festival programmes, the local celebrities and their doings. In every house there are scales and weights, and the household is engaged in occasional or regular trade. Accounts in money and kind are current between neighbours. Whatever spare produce remains is exposed for sale.

167. APPROACH TO THE VILLAGE.

The villages either have 361
a quick fence of impenetrable [349]
thorny bamboo (*myinwa*), or a
hedge of cactus and briar or
bamboo *chevaux-de-frise*. In [311]
some parts they are open. The
old towns (*myô*) had ramparts [346]
and stockades (Nos. 6, 371,
387). The highest sites about
the village are for the *zedi*, the
Payâ-myé or sacred ground, the
next best are for the *kyaung*.
Then comes the enclosure of

796
782
796

418. SUNLAUNG AT THADINDYUT FESTIVAL.

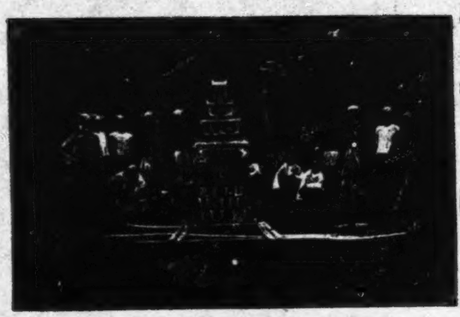
and, in order to possess its proper value, should be completed in a day and a night. This is the only approach to a vigil. The texture is loose, and broad bands of tinsel are shot through to make up the woof faster.

Tawthalín is a minor festival, falling in Lent, and observed only in Pegu. The *Tawthalín* offerings are distinguished by being in thousands, one thousand little cakes, one thousand plantains, and so on (No. 282). The number one thousand is said to be symbolical
[801] of the thousand *gâta* or stanzas of the *Wéthandayâ zat*, the legend of Gawdâma
Buddha's last incarnation but one, closely prefiguring the final incarnation.

782 The above are the Buddhist festivals, which are celebrated by the whole
population together, with all the *éclat* they can give them. The only other
776 recurring observances of a religious character have nothing to do with
Buddhism, and are rejected by all earnest and enlightened Buddhists. These observances, if not furtively conducted, as is often the case, are kept by individuals only, or by households at a time; they have sufficient in common with the *nat* worship of the hill tribes, to show what the original Burman and Taláing worship may have been. Unlike the Karén, who knows only
of evil *nats*, the Burman has both good and evil spirits. The former belong
776 to the land of the *zat* ro-
772 mance, the latter are chiefly
the survival of the primitive
775 paganism. In the Burman
cosmogony, *nat-yua* is the
delectable land to which, by
a courtesy analogous to the
[643] German "*hoch-*" and "*höchst-*
selig," the kings are said
to migrate at their demise.
[524] A higher order than *nat* is
thadyâ and *thadyâ-min*, and
above these the highest order
of being, *byammâ*, the cloud-

419. FIRE-BALLOONS AT THADINDYUT.

dwellers to whom the Burmans pretend to owe their origin. These ethereal beings are subject to the law of *karma*, and re-birth. They have to attain *nirvâna* like men, through virtue. Under "gods" in the Pali scriptures are to be understood such beings as these. Together with men they form the group *thaddawâ* — rational beings—to whom the message of the Buddha is delivered. (See Stevenson, *Lexicon*, pp. 603, 788.) The higher orders of existence are not to be confounded with the higher religious states, *ayahdt, ayáttapô*, which are attained by the "noble path" alone (p. 46). In this fairyland, situated in the *Htmawúnta taw* (Himalayas) and its clouds, the poetry of the people centres. (See *The Soul of a People*, Chapter XXI.) As the heavens are indwelt by ethereal beings, so also everything on earth has its presiding genius. The heavenly *genii* are beneficent, the terrestrial ones friendly or malign. The *nats* of the mountains inspire awe, and their protection is invoked against wild beasts and dangers to wayfarers. A *nat* is pro-

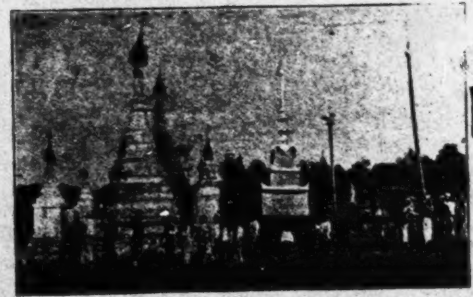


420. RIVER ILLUMINATIONS AT THADINDYUT.

776
772
775
[346]
[771]

421. MAZES AT THADINDYUT.

[346]



422. TAZAUNGMON FESTIVAL.

776
[346]

29: Slater

AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775
●

[For data on Nirvana and other conceptions bearing on the soul in relation to deity and the cosmos, and for data on the after life in Burmese Buddhist theology, see category 116, pp. 33-82.]

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

121

the general reader may be well advised first to range himself alongside some one, specific tradition, not avoiding the details which present the difficulties as well as the rewards of investigation. He may thus escape those distortions, confusions and misinterpretations which result from a merely surface acquainatance when religious beliefs are torn from their living context and discussed as abstract propositions.

2. *The Paradox of Nirvana*

777
775

The symbol of Nirvana is the more emphatic because it is set against the distinctive backcloth of Indian belief, including the belief that present existence does not end with death: man is reborn in this world or a similar realm, and existence with all its ills may continue through a dreaded cycle of successive rebirths. Nirvana, for the Buddhist, is the word of release from this cycle.

But what kind of release does Nirvana signify? Is it the finish, the final dissolution, or a new beginning under happier conditions? Conceptions of Nirvana as ultimate annihilation, we shall term negative. They may include the view that annihilation is postponed or preceded by a brief moment of enjoyed sanctity or intellectual illumination before the final death; but in the end, man reaches his terminus and there is nothing beyond.[3] "People . . . disappear for ever in Nirvāṇa by being extinct."[4]

Positive conceptions, on the other hand, interpret Nirvana in terms of fulfilment, survival and bliss, a continuation of life beyond the cycle of present, chequered existence. Such conceptions may be compared with the hope of immortality in other religions. They signify an ultimate consummation, even when the conception of individual survival is vague or absent. "Nirvana is none other than that ultimate, eternal, primordial Mystery, which all religious people have sought for, divined and intuited, which all religions have tried to express by means of weak and insufficient symbols, similes, concepts and images."[5]

Now there are terms and passages in the Buddhist literature which seem to demand a choice between these two rival conceptions. But the Buddhist system of thought implies their combination. Herein we have the paradox of Nirvana. On the one hand, Nirvana is denoted in terms which encourage a positive conception. It is the further shore, the harbour of refuge, the cool cave, the matchless island, the holy city; it is peace, rest, supreme happiness. On the other hand we appear to be confronted by curt negation. Nibbana is the Void. It is Cessation.

---

[3] E.g., as in the theories of Childers, Rhys Davids.

[4] Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 20.

[5] Friedrich Heiler, *Die buddhistische Versenkung*, chap. 10, p. 42.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779*
775

There is a further paradox. In spite of these terms which are connotative, whether positive or negative, Nirvana is also said to defy description. It is inexpressible. The state of Nirvana is unfathomable, beyond perception and beyond logic.[6]

There is a still further paradox. Even if this contrast of terms is resolved, the very conception of Nirvana seems to contradict the entire system of Buddhist thought.[7] For Buddhism, it is said, denies the soul. In the place of the soul, there is nothing but a temporary conjunction of phenomenal aggregates which dissolves at death. If we grant that Nirvana is a positive consummation, who is there to attain this goal ! If, on the contrary, we interpret Nirvana as annihilation, who is there to be executed !

Nirvana, therefore, is a paradox set within a context of paradox.

3. *The Discovery of Buddhism*

000

Amongst Western expositors, an earlier disposition to interpret Nirvana in terms of annihilation has been succeeded by a more positive conception, with one or two voices crying in the wilderness to maintain the older view.[8] The new tendency is exemplified by Fr. Tayman d'Eypernon, whose recent work represents Nirvana as "the flowering of personality."[9] He draws a parallel between Buddhist implications and the terms of European scholasticism. This conclusion is the more significant because it is derived from studies pursued in Ceylon, the citadel of Southern Buddhism. Some of the earlier scholars agreed that when Buddhism travelled north to China and Japan, Nirvana became a positive conception, but the scriptures of Southern Buddhism, reflecting an earlier, more authentic tradition, implied, they believed, a negative conception.

Western scholars, however, are still groping very much in the dark, for Buddhism, so far as the West is concerned, is a recent discovery. It was only in 1855 that Fausboll published his translation of the *Dhammapada*, the first text, and a slight text at that, of the important scriptures of Southern Buddhism to be made available to the West. There is still a vast literature to be translated and examined, and the rendering of basic terms is still in debate.[10]

---

[6] Cf. P.E.D. pp. 198ff.; Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism*, pp. 73, 74; Bimala Churn Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, chap. XI, pp. 77ff.

[7] Fr. Taymans d'Eypernon, *Les Paradoxes du Bouddhisme*, Part II, Section 2, chap. 1, p. 187.

[8] Notably Stcherbatsky, whose *Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa* was published in 1927.

[9] *Les Paradoxes du Bouddhisme*, Part II, Section 2, chap. II, pp. 212ff.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779* [792] By the forming of the Order, it has been said, a vital gospel for Everyman was gradually transformed into a monkish discipline and a dry scholasticism.[21] Others, however, may see in the monastery, not only the very genius of Buddhism, but a further sign of its essentially religious character, while a wider reference will emphasise the relation of the monastery to the life of the community in countries such as Burma and Siam, where Buddhism has remained a dominant influence.

The religious character of Buddhism may be discerned even in the discord among his followers which began in the Buddha's lifetime and divided the first great council, which was held after his death, for sectarianism is more the sign of religious zeal than of philosophic interest. Rival interpretations led eventually to the two main divisions of Buddhism which exist today — the Mahāyāna (Greater Vehicle) or Northern Buddhism, prevalent in China and Japan, and the Hīnayāna (Lesser Vehicle) or Southern Buddhism, prevalent in Ceylon, Burma and Siam.

Prior to this division, there had been a vigorous revival of missionary activity under the great king, Aśoka (circa B.C. 245). Travelling overseas, Buddhism established its citadel in Ceylon when the new faith declined in India before a resurgent Hinduism. A similar missionary vitality expressed itself in the later developments which marked the rise of the Mahāyāna tradition. "The teaching of Buddha is for the salvation of all living beings," Aśvaghoṣa, the St. Paul of Northern Buddhism, is said to have declared when he became the willing and respected captive of the conqueror, Kaniṣka. Buddhism is essentially tolerant and seldom aggressive, but time and again in its long history it has manifested this fervour and persistence. It has known occasions of decline and even decadence. It has, in places, gone underground and almost disappeared. But through all vicissitudes it has shown a remarkable tenacity, and today it is still one of the living religions of the world. Father d'Eypernon remarks its 'suppleness.' Buddhist monks at the present time, he affirms, do not hesitate to affirm that Buddhism is excluded from any Communist campaign against religion, since the Buddha was the first Communist.[22]

779* 775 With the early expansion of Buddhism primarily in mind, Dahlmann reiterated Max Müller's objection that Nirvana, conceived as Annihilation, could never have been the goal of such a missionary faith as Buddhism. 'Nirvāṇa, die Oede des Nichts, ein "welterobernde" Ideal!'[23] The exclamation arises even more irrepressibly if we consider the subsequent history of Buddhism. Nirvana, in its religious context, may not be

---

[21] Cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Sakya*, and other works.

[22] *Les paradoxes du Bouddhisme*, Preface, p. IX.

[23] *Nirvāṇa, Eine Studie zur Vorgeschichte des Buddhismus*, pp. 5, 6.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

a simple, straightforward affirmation, but it is not denial. No religion 779*
could so persist if it merely brought man's elemental aspirations to a 775
sharp cliff and threw them over.

5. Burmese Buddhism

If there are good reasons for approaching the subject of religious 121
paradox by a study of Buddhism, there are also good reasons for considering Buddhism as it appears in Burma where it is still a living and a dominant religion.

In the study of great religious traditions there is always need to maintain a balance between regard for the written texts and for the living expression. To consult one without the other is to misinterpret both. What the Christmas stories in the gospels mean to Christians cannot be fully discerned if they are isolated from Christmas observance any more than the Jātaka stories of Buddhism can be fully appreciated until they are read in the context of popular faith, with its drama and poetry. And what an entirely misleading impression of monastic Buddhism one might get from the Abhidhamma literature unless one has seen something of the life of a Buddhist monastery! This balance, as our Burmese critic observed, has not always been maintained in the study of Southern Buddhism.

Burma provides exceptional opportunities for such a study. "If any- [792]
body wants to know and see Buddhism as conceived and preached by the Buddha himself so far as the Saṃgha life goes," says a recent writer, "one can see a nearest approach to it in the monasteries of Burma.... Of all the Indianised lands of South-eastern Asia, Burma is indeed the only country where monastic Buddhism of the Theravāda nikāya survives to this day in its pristine purity."[24] And the same writer emphasises the impact of this monastic life on Burmese life and culture.

In Burma, eighty-five per cent of the inhabitants are Buddhists. Of [162]
these, one in every hundred is a Buddhist monk. Go where you will, you 779*
find the yellow robe of the Order, the pagoda gleaming white across the plain or on the hillside, the monastery in every village, intimately related to the life of the people. This has been the situation for centuries. Here one can see Buddhism in action; one can try to interpret its symbols in the light of the very real, if rustic, civilisation which it has shaped and
maintained. Burma is one of the most interesting countries in the Orient. 565
Its people are literate. There is freedom from caste, and, for that matter, 562
scarcely any class system. In the days of the monarchy, "when you left 779*
the king, you dropped at once to the villager."[25] An Englishman observed,

---

[24] Nihar-Ranjan Ray, *Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*, chap. VII, p. 262.

[25] Fielding Hall, *The Soul of a People*, chap. IX, p. 106.

What is of further importance for our present inquiry is the fact that
the tradition thus established throughout Burma was the Hīnayāna 175
tradition, not the Mahāyāna.[29] It will therefore be the more significant if 779*
we find in Burmese Buddhism a positive conception of Nirvana, for, in 795
the past, scholars have frequently associated a negative conception with [775]
the Hīnayāna tradition, enlarging the distance between the two schools: 177
Nirvana might spell paradise in China or Japan, it was argued, but for Southern Buddhists it was the Void.

There were, it is true, outposts of the Mahāyāna faith in Burma, notably at Pagan, where Mahāyāna cults survived for perhaps two centuries after A-naw-ra-hta's conversion, tolerated by the now dominating Hīnayāna tradition which absorbed some elements of the sister faith.[30] There is also evidence, not only of Mahāyāna rivalry, but also of Brahmanical Hinduism (as at Pagan) in Southern Burma in the earlier centuries.[31]

A first glance at the map may occasion surprise that Mahāyāna influence on Burmese Buddhism was not more considerable, for China, where the Mahāyāna tradition thrived for several centuries, is just across the north east border and the Burmese themselves are a Mongolian race. A second glance, however, discovers the far distances between centres of influence. There is a sweeping borderland of mountain ranges and remote valleys, and, in the earlier centuries, the buffer state of Nanchao lay in between China and the Burmese kingdoms. The sea route from India was the easier route to Southern Burma and Indian traders and adventurers were the forerunners of Indian missionaries.

When all qualifications have been made, we must conclude that the formative tradition of Buddhism in Burma was the Hīnayāna, introduced from India and nourished from Ceylon. And from the eleventh century onwards, "the stronger vitality of the Southern school completely absorbed, assimilated and obliterated the Northern school."[32]

The royal encouragement given by A-naw-ra-hta was frequently 643,
echoed by later rulers. Burmese kings were styled 'great Captains of the 779*
Law,' and as late as the nineteenth century good King Mindon convened 175
the 'Fifth Buddhist Council' at Mandalay, when the scriptures were engraved on over seven hundred tablets of marble.

---

[29] The term, Hīnayāna, is sometimes regarded as disparaging. 'Southern' or 'Theravāda' Buddhism might be preferred in this connection, but it is probably less confusing to use the terms now familiar in the West.

[30] Ray, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, p. 93, and *Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*, pp. 150ff.

[31] Ray, *Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*, pp. 86, 87; cf. Taw Sein Kho, *Census Report* (Burma, 1901), p. 32.

[32] Taw Sein Kho, *ibid.*, p. 32.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER II

BUDDHISM AND ANIMISM IN BURMA

1. *Animism or Buddhism?*

114 121 It never occurred to anybody, remarked the Burmese critic quoted in our previous chapter, that the best way to find out what Nirvana meant was to consider its significance in some present, living tradition of Buddhism. His criticism was apposite in its immediate reference. As a matter of fact, however, it was precisely this course which *did* occur to Bishop Bigandet a century ago, as his voluminous footnotes to his translation of the Burmese Legend of Gaudama show.[1] The same may be said of his predecessor in the field, Father Sangermano, and of several successors.[2] Our present purpose is to take up the task where they left it. We hope to describe Buddhism in Burma in sufficient detail to exhibit the essentially religious character of the Nirvana paradox.

775 198 Since the context is Burmese and the reference is to Hīnayāna or Southern Buddhism, Nirvana for the time being will be *Nibbāna*, which is its form in the Pali language of the Hīnayāna scriptures. In Burmese, Nibbāna is Nebban.

771 One reason, perhaps, why this approach to the subject has been largely disregarded by Western scholars in recent years is the prevalent impression that the popular religion in Burma is a syncretism in which the dominant element is not Buddhism, but Animism. "Hinayana," writes Dr. Bouquet, in an outline of Comparative Religion, "is still 'the little vehicle,' because it does not and cannot appeal to the masses of any population.... It is true that it is the Buddhism of Burma and Ceylon. But anyone who knows these countries is well aware that the real popular faith of their peoples is not Hinayana but a thinly veiled animism."[3]

---

[1] Rt. Rev. P. Bigandet, Bishop of Ramatha, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama, the Buddha of the Burmese*, first published in Rangoon 1858.

[2] Father Vincentius Sangermano, *The Burmese Empire*, first published in 1833.

[3] A. C. Bouquet, *Comparative Religion*, new ed., 1945, p. 129. Dr. J. B. Pratt's balanced estimate of the Burma situation in his *The Pilgrimage of Buddhism* (1928) should have done something to correct this impression.

the lakes, the mountains and there are distant *Nat* realms ruled by *Nat* 771
chieftains. All of these spirits are capricious. They encourage the view 776
that life is a gamble. A man must bargain and wile his way through as
best he can, hemmed in by a vague, immeasureable threat of evil. A
religion, therefore, which points the way through the maze, indicates
some order in the realm of caprice and promises deliverance from evil,
may be the more welcome. On the other hand, it contains a challenge to
caprice in oneself.

2. *Animism and Buddhism interwoven*

There is no question, therefore, of the survival of Animism in Burma, 771
nor of its influence. The only question which arises is the *extent* of this 779*
influence. Is it so persistent and powerful that Buddhism is no more than
a surface polish ?

At first sight, this indeed may seem to be the case, for not only is
Animism a parallel cultus, sometimes furtive but frequently brazen; it
also seems to be interwoven in the very texture of popular Buddhist
expression and practice. As a boy, the Burman learns how Nats watched
over the infant Buddha, how the Buddha, by his virtue, defeated the
jealous Manh *Nat*, how the rest of the *Nat* world acclaimed the victory
with shouts of exultation. *Nats* appear in all the subsequent events of the
Buddha's history.[15] On pagoda platforms the boy may see scenes depicting
the *Nats*. Early in his education, he may learn a poem celebrating the
Buddha's victory. On the most memorable day of his life as a Buddhist,
the day of his *shin-byu* or confirmation, he may *shikoh* to the *Nat* shrine.
At his death, a monk may be called to his side, not to give him spiritual [792]
consolation but 'because the good influence of the monk's pious presence
keeps away evil spirits.'[16]

Consequently, Burmese Buddhists have been criticised for their inconsistency. [775] ●
How, it is asked, can a belief that a human 'spirit' has been
transported to the *Nat* realm be reconciled with the Buddhist denial of
the soul ? If Buddhism denies the Divine, and even Buddha himself is not
worshipped, how can it be right to worship and propitiate these *Nat*
godlings ? How can it be legitimate to expect their assistance, if man is 782
the arbiter of his own destiny, subject to moral law alone, as Buddhism 779*
affirms ? And Buddhism teaches: Thou shalt not kill. What, then, of fowls 771
and oxen and even humans sacrificed to propitiate *Nats?* Toleration is

---

[15] Cf. Bigandet, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 37; cf. Temple, *Thirty Seven Nats*, p. 6.

[16] Cf. Purser and Saunders, *M.B.B.*, pp. 38, 97; Sir George Scott, *The Burman: His Life and Notions*, Vol. I, chap. XXII, p. 289.

779* 796 621 its national, character. The frequent festivals not only enliven, they express and stabilise the community life. They are often local, but certain shrines, such as the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon, have become centres of pilgrimage. In a country which has had a strong tendency to de-centralization — the king's authority was often very weak — the Buddhist Order has made for cohesion, and, in modern times, Buddhist monks have been active in the movement for national independence.

779* 775 In spite, however, of this social expression, Buddhism in Burma, as elsewhere, is very much a matter of *individual* concern. We have seen this individualism within the monastery. It is equally marked outside the monastery. One of the most popular *zats* is the story of Wethandaya, who, in order to gain his own salvation, gives away his wife and family to a rapacious Brahmin.[56] "Each must bear his own burden," is a favourite quotation.[57] Its primary reference may be to moral responsibility.

This brings us to the decidely *ethical* character of Burmese Buddhism. *Kutho* (worthiness) is the central concept here, and "it is clear that the Burmese Buddhists have a more *mathematical* conception of Merit than other folk." "The ordinary belief is very concrete — so many good deeds mean so much to one's credit in another world."[58] Sometimes very material rewards are indicated. "The reward for building a monastery is a palace in a *Nat* heaven with seven towers, and in this palace dwell seven hundred *Nat* wives.... For a gift of sticks for use in a bath room, the donor will be reborn with perfumed body."[59]

[735] Almsgiving is a sure means of 'heaping up *Kutho*.' Since the benefit accruing to the donor partly depends on the worthiness of the object, the maintenance of religion is a valued means of self-help. Hence the many pagodas. Hence the gifts to the monasteries. There is no more coveted title than 'Builder of Monasteries.' Hence, too, the welcome to the monk [792] as he comes in the early morning with his begging bowl. The monk may *seem* to be the chief recipient. But in the things which matter, he is the donor.

Though others may thus provide the opportunity, essentially the activity is self-help. Emphasis is laid on individual responsibility. It is something a man must do for himself.

It is something he *can* do. Thus the conception of *Kutho* challenges any animistic idea that man is altogether at the mercy of capricious spirits.

---

[56] *M.B.B.*, pp. 44, 103.

[57] *M.B.B.*, p. 45.

[58] *M.B.B.*, p. 51, p. 76. The usual, though inadequate translation of Kutho, as already observed, is Merit.

[59] *M.B.B.*, p. 51.

779* 775 It also modifies the sense of fatalism which might be derived from another conception, this time a Buddhist conception — the idea that a man's present character and situation are largely determined, according to inexorable moral law, by what he has done, and not done, in previous births. "As the wheel follows the draught ox, punishment follows sin."[60] Yet man is no fettered slave. Like other people the world over, the Burman vacillates between fatalism and the sense of his own power to help himself, between *Kan* and *Kutho*. On the whole, *Kutho* wins. "Merit weighs heavy, demerit light," says the Burmese proverb hopefully.

Pessimism, then, 'touched, strongly touched, with hope' – such is the Burmese religion. But what of the further qualification, 'touched with mysticism.'? We have seen that there may be an element of Nature mysticism. Can we go further and discern any sense of the sacred, any sense of religious dependence on higher power? In spite of the Nature mysticism and an occasional side glance in the direction of benevolent *Nats*, Burmese religion seems to be a religion of self-reliance, self-assurance and self-responsibility. A man 'must work out his own salvation.' Does this mean that there is nothing at all which corresponds to the Christian addition to the text — "with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you?"[61]

779* 775 782 Various efforts have been made to locate such a recognition. It is remarked that a pagoda in Prome is named "the image or pagoda where, if you pray, you will receive."[62] But the term, prayer, is used rather loosely by some present-day Buddhists. The monastery 'prayers' which we have cited could scarcely be termed prayers in any strict sense. Instances have been reported of simple villagers petitioning the Buddha for mercies, such as a child's recovery from sickness,[63] and I have myself seen women in attitiudes of prayer, with clasped hands and suppliant faces, before Gautama's image. Peasants recite the 'Song of Victory", celebrating the Buddha's triumphs over foes and tempters, as a 'mantra' to ward off evil.[64] Since a man may pray that his own *Kutho* may avail to help others, a natural sequence of thought may lead him to consider that the Buddha's *Kutho* may also avail, though some would say that the Buddha is lost in Nibbāna, far beyond this present existence. It is very questionable, however, if there is any sense of Divine Grace or prayer in the sense of communion with a Divine Being.

779* 773 The Buddha is certainly venerated. No account of Burmese Buddhism would be adequate without emphasising very definitely the central place he holds in the life and thought of the people. Popular Buddhism, as we

---

[60] *M.B.B.*, p. 45.

[63] *M.B.B.*, p. 70.

[64] *M.B.B.*, p. 97.

[61] *2 Philippians* 2: 12, 13.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

have seen, is a religion of story, and it is essentially the Buddha story, the 779*
life of Gautama, rehearsed, recited, pictured, dramatised, told and told 773
again.

"To hear of the Buddha from living lips in this country, which is full of his influence, where the spire of his monastery marks every village, and where every man has at one time or another been his monk, is quite a different thing to reading of him in far off countries.... To hear the yellow-robed monk tell of that life ... is a thing never to be forgotten. A sympathy comes to you from the circle of believers and you believe too.... And as they tell you the story of that great life, they bring it home to you with reflection and comment ... till you forget that he of whom they speak lived so long ago."[65]

Yet Burmese laymen, villagers or craftsmen, let alone monks, will [774]
flatly reject any suggestion that the Buddha was divine. Many of them, moreover, will explain their devotion very intelligently. They will make it abundantly clear that Gautama is venerated as a Socrates or a Moses might be venerated. No more. No less. His life was human, and in that very fact they see encouragement for others.

It is not, then, to the conception of the Buddha that we must look for 779*
the religious ultimate of Southern Buddhism. Nor is it to the conception 775
of the *Dhamma*, as some have suggested. A highly sophisticated intellectual might conceivably worship the 'Law within' but the Burmese Buddhist is seldom highly sophisticated, nor does he think of the Dhamma as the Law within: it is the Law without, expounded by the *Saṃgha*.

It is elsewhere we must look for the recognition of the Divine. It may perhaps be contained in that looking forward to Nibbāna, which is the goal of all Buddhist aspiration. From what has thus far been remarked of the character of Burmese Buddhism, we can at least expect to find a positive, not a negative, conception of Nibbāna in this context.

Perhaps, too, Buddhism in Burma illustrates, in some degree, what 779*
may have been the original emphasis of the Buddha's teaching and the secret of his appeal. Perhaps it has retained or recovered something of that original vitality.

Mrs Rhys Davids has suggested that the Buddha aroused response because he preached a gospel of hopeful Wayfaring from Good to Better, a caravan journey through the worlds, "a pilgrim's progress ... not so much with a load of sin to be discarded, as with an ever growing force of *artha* — the good, the needed, the better."[66] He believed, with the seers of his time, that the Divine was immanent in man,[67] but he saw this

---

[65] Fielding Hall, *The Soul of a People*, chap. II, p. 18.

[66] *Sakya*, chap. VI, pp. 104ff.

[67] *Ibid.*, chap. IV, pp. 69ff.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

The celestial guide directed his rapid course through the regions of 773
lesolation, where dwells an eternal horror. The first object they met with 539
vas a broad and deep river... glowing like a flame.... On the banks of hat river stand the infernal ministers.... wounding, piercing the unfor-unate wretches who try to get out of that horrible and burning water.....

"What are the crimes," asked the terrified prince, "that have committed he unfortunate inhabitants of this place to undergo such unheard-of ufferings ?"

"They are," replied Matali, "the persecutors of the weak, the heartless ppressors of the poor etc."

At another hell, Matali explains, "These suffer for having done no good to their fellow-creatures, for preventing others to do some, and for having borne envy to their neighbours."

After visiting other hells and receiving similar explanations, "Nemi was suddenly brought over to the beautiful, smiling and blissful seats of the blessed. He soon descried the celebrated palace made of diamonds.... In that palace Biranee occupied a splendid apartment; she was then lying on a soft sofa, surrounded by more than a thousand beauties.

"What good works," asked Nemi, "has Biranee practised to deserve such a magnificent reward ?"

Matali replied, "This daughter of *Nats* was formerly a slave in the house of a pounha. She was always very attentive to all the duties of her position, and at the same time regularly observed the precepts of the law. On a certain day her mistress, who was wont to feed eight Rahans (monks) daily, fell into a fit of anger, and said that she was unable to bear any longer the fatigue attending the maintenance of these religious. But the young slave, full of religious zeal, took upon herself the labour of feeding the Rahans. For this good and meritorious work she is enjoying the happiness of her present position."

After visiting other heavens and receiving other similar explanations, Nemi was introduced to the presence of the chief of the *Nats*.

On his return to his kigdom he told his people what he had seen "and concluded by exhorting his people to be liberal in bestowing alms, that they might hereafter be admitted to share in the enjoyment of the Nats' happiness.

---- from Bishop Bigandet, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 153ff.

(From the context it seems clear that the Bishop had not himself seen any copy of the Jatakas. He says that he has heard that there is such a book in Ceylon and makes a conjecture about its contents.)

NOTE C.

AN-ATTĀ DOCTRINE, NIBBĀNA AND INDIVIDUAL SURVIVAL 775

The Buddhist denial of the soul or ego seems to the average non-Buddhist inconsistent with the belief in individual survival after death which belief in Nibbāna seems to imply. But intelligent Buddhists are equally bewilder-

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

775 ed by the attitude of non-Buddhists. Disputants are often at cross purposes. In frequent discussions I have therefore tried to understand how the argument appears to the Buddhist.

Humpty Dumpty, thinks the non-Buddhist, has had a great fall in Buddhist psychology. He cannot see how all the king's horses and all the king's men of Buddhism can possibly put Humpty together again, and, unless they can, he sees no ground for any view of Nibbāna which includes a prospect of individual survival. He cannot, indeed, see how the Buddhist can consistently speak of individuals at all or reconcile his theories with individual persistence, before or after death, still less with ethical individual responsibility.

The Buddhist, on the other hand, doubts if Humpty ever sat on the wall. It is evident, to his mind, that Humpty has always been what he evidently seems to be now: a mix of shell, white and yolk — and, if you analyse the mix further, something still more complex: an aggregate of aggregates. There is, he admits, an individual splash on the ground and it is convenient to give it a name. But apart from the shell, the white, the yolk, what other Humpty can there be? Why seek to put him on the wall? This, of course, is not the simile he uses. He generally quotes the chariot analogy — Nāgasena's argument to King Milinda — the word 'chariot' is but a term for pole, axle, wheels, chariot-body and banner-staff.[1]

But there is sometimes apparent another ground for Buddhist bewilderment. He wonders how his Western questioner can be so naive! What he has in mind is his own development from childish ideas, and the childish, animistic ideas of simple villagers who still think of the butterfly *(leip-byā)* which is thought to leave the body at death — and may even do so during deep sleep[2]. This presumably intelligent Westerner, talking about a soul, appears still to believe in some little mannikin, some semi-material kernel. How incredible! Does he not realise that human personality is much more complex than that?

There are, it is true, many simple Buddhists in Burma who have no such difficulty. Their allegiance to the An-attā doctrine is merely lip-allegiance. To them Maung Maung is Maung Maung. And he may be Maung Maung's grandfather come to re-birth. Expectant mother's discuss such possible re-births. One of these, a young widow, lived in hope that the child to be born would be her deceased husband. We need not attribute such ideas solely to the survival of animism. They are just as much encouraged by Jataka stories.

775
828
In the Dialogue cited in chapter III, the argument for individual survival through the persistence of sound *khandhas* in the ultimate Nibbāna condition, *Anupādisesa*, is based on the distinction drawn between *upādi* and *upādā*. The former, *upādi*, which is the term referred to in *Anupādisesa*, is derived from *upa* and the verb *ādiyati* – 'to be grasped.' Hence it is said to refer to the five *khandhas* grasped at by four *upādānas*. Buddha-

---

[1] *Milindapañha*, 25. 1 (Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, pp. 129ff.).

[2] Cf. Forbes, *British Burma*, chap. IV, p. 99.

775
828

ghosa is quoted in support of this interpretation: "The *Anupādisesa* Nibbāna is so called because of the non-becoming of the five khandhas *which have been grasped at* as effects by the *kamma* attended by desire, pride and error." U. Agga in the Dialogue concludes that it is clear that this leaves it open to believe that sound *khandhas*, the fruitional consciousness of arahantship obtains, in the *Anupādisesa* Nibbāna as in the prior condition, *Sa-upādisesa*. "The orthodox view according to the *Dhammasangaṇi* is that the worldly mind and material body alone are *upādānīyo* and the transcendent, spiritual consciousness which is beyond the reach of *upādānas* is *anupādānīya*."

'Yet ninety nine per cent of Burman Buddhists.. understand this word *upādi* to mean all kinds of *khandhas*.' He has previously suggested that this may be partly due to the fact that they confuse *upādi* with *upadhi*. Now upadhi is derived from *upa* and the root *dhā* --- 'to bear, conduct or carry' and is thus applied to *khandhas* generally, besides corruptions, sensual desires and kamma. There are scriptural passages which speak of all *upadhis* being given up in Nibbāna, and a Brahmana who has attained Nibbāna is described as *nir-upadhi*.' It is argued, however, that these passages mean simply that such an arahant is released from *unsound khandhas* --- not all.

In his accompanying Essay, Pe Maung Tin gives an interpretation which also, on the whole, favours individual survival. But he says nothing about *anupādisesa khandhas*. *An-upādisesa* means "nibbāna without any residue of *upādi's* at the death of the saint" whose "aggregates are dissolved" --- but only his aggregates. There is no reference, therefore, to any annihilation of ultimate personality, and the Saṁyutta Nikāya says: "The saint on the dissolution of the body is established in the *dhamma* (dhammaṭṭho) and his personality is not counted as man, god, brahma or being" and the commentary explains dhammaṭṭho as meaning: "established in the nature of saints as well as in nibbāna itself." Pe Maung Tin emphasises the distinction between conditioned and unconditioned reality; he also emphasises that there is but one Nibbāna (*sa-upādisesa* and *an-upādisesa* being but a difference in name, as applied to different stages). He finally emphasises that 'no analysis will reveal the true nature of the Reality.' Knowledge can only be attained by intuition, and meantime can only be indicated in negative terms.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note on SHWE ZAN AUNG

114
775
792

Besides translating (in collaboration with Mrs Rhys Davids) the *Katthā-Vatthu* and the *Abhidhammattha-Saṃgaha* for the Pali Text Society, with an Introductory Essay to the latter, Shwe Zan Aung published, in instalments, in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society* (1917) a study of "The Buddhist Philosophy of the Real" and followed this up by the "Dialogue on Nibbāna," which I have quoted in chapter III. Born in 1871 at Akyab, he graduated from Rangoon College in 1892 and was later appointed a Magistrate in Henzada.

"My colleage," wrote Mrs Rhys Davids, "has been in close touch with several very learned monks, including the distinguished Doctor, Ledi Sadaw, in a country where the study of Abbidhamma, or philosophy, is cultivated more than elsewhere. Bhikkus from Ceylon come now, as in days of old, to study philosophy under the Theras of Burma, so renowned are the latter for proficiency in this subject. Mr Aung has also, through a course of study necessarily limited ...... assimilated a notable purview of our own philosophic tradition. He is thus better fitted than most Oriental students to translate into our vehicles of expression the living meaning, as distinguished from the *etymological* connotation, of Buddhist philosophical terms."[1] "I have," wrote Shwe Zan Aung himself, in his last note in the *Compendium*, "no theories of my own. ... I am acting only as the mouthpiece of my country's teachers. At best I am but an interpreter of Burmese views based on the Ceylon Commentary and the works of Buddhaghosa. You may take my essay as medieval Buddhism presented through modern glasses."[2]

This may have been true enough of the essay in question — the introductory essay to the Compendium. But in his 'Buddhist Philosophy of the Real' he certainly presented theories of his own which aroused considerable controversy at the time. His studies in Western philosophy, to which Mrs Rhys Davids referred, led him to conclude that there were marked affinities between Buddhist thought on the one hand, and Bergson and Bertrand Russell on the other hand. Bergson and Russell — a strange alignment! as Shwe Zan Aung's critics remarked. But Aung saw a comparison between Buddhism and Bergson's concept of durée and also between the Bergsonian and Buddhist emphasis on intuition, while Russell's relational logic resembled, to his mind, Buddhist logic. Both Bergson and Russell are said to have been interested in these comparisons from Burma.[3]

Aung's principal critic was Dr. G.R.T. Ross, who accused Aung of attempting to 'force an identity between the doctrines of these modern writers and Buddhism.' Ross wrote, that passages quoted by Aung himself

---

[1] Editor's Preface, *The Compendium of Philosophy*, pp. xiii, xiv.

[2] *Compendium of Philosophy:* Note 'On Authority in Buddhist Belief,' p. 283.

[3] Cf. *J.B.R.S.* Vol. VII, Part III, p. 229; Vol. VIII, part III, p. 266.

114
775
792

showed that the Buddhist 'criterion of reality is permanence, that of unreality is impermanence.'[4] Aung had quoted Buddhaghosa: "There is nothing permanent and constant like Nibbāna". (If Aung can be said to have disregarded this interpretation of Nibbāna in his essay, he certainly did not do so in his Dialogue).

The criticism aroused a spirited reply, including a confession of orthodoxy. "Dr Ross thinks that I am dissatisfied with the present attitude of traditional Buddhism. Buddhist writers are conservative.... Now and again, we may have a controversy amidst our own ranks owing to different interpretations of one and the same passage. But the more I study traditional Buddhism as it has come down to us in writings, the more I have reason to be satisfied with it."[5]

This reply was published in the same year as his Dialogue. It seems clear that he regarded the Dialogue as a fair presentation of Saṃgha discussions. His own view is partly reflected in U Agga's opinions, but he also suggests that these opinions have roots in the past, while Sumana, the exponent of the Ledi school, speaks for more recent opinion. At the same time Sumana voices the objection emphasised by Ross that Nibbāna cannot be conceived as flux.

In the controversy, Aung had an ally in Professor K.M.Ward who emphasised both the reliability and significance of Shwe Zan Aung as an interpreter of Burmese Buddhism. Mrs Rhys Davids, said Ward, was dissatisfied with her own translation of Buddhist psychology. She felt that she had not been able to understand the traditional terms. Hence her collaboration with Aung in the 'Compendium.' "This book revolutionised the methods of Pali research," wrote Ward, "I think it safe to say that no western scholar of repute would now attempt a translation of the all-important Abhidhamma or other technical works without colleborating with someone on the spot — in Burma or Ceylon. U Shwe Zan Aung then inaugurated the new movement. He did not as Dr Ross would have his readers suppose .. give us dogmatically high sounding philosophical terms (whose substitution in the older translations immediately made sense of them). On the contrary he collected a number of definitions, sentences, quotations in which the disputed term appeared: he explained the traditional meanings to his English editor, ... By this means a near modern equivalent to the Buddhist term was generally found... What we want is more of such work."[6]

Besides his close contacts with the Saṃgha scholars, Aung collaborated, too, with another distinguished Pali translator, U Pe Maung Tin. As we have seen, Lēdi Sayādaw was among the scholars he consulted, and Lēdi's own work has had a wide influence on modern Burmese thought. Aung takes note of this, but he distinguishes it from earlier schools. There are grounds, then, for the conclusion that Shwe Zan Aung is himself the more reliable interpreter of the Burmese tradition as a whole.

---

[4] *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. VIII, Part I, pp. 57ff.
[5] *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. VIII, Part II, pp. 166ff.
[6] *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. VIII, Part III, pp. 263ff.